

EC agrees on single currency by 1999

MAASTRICHT (R) — The European Community (EC) reached a landmark agreement Monday for some of its members to introduce a single currency by the end of the century. Sweeping aside Britain's reservations, EC finance ministers decided that those states which met the criteria could launch a joint currency as early as 1997, and it is irreversible. French presidential spokesman Jean-Michel Ducloux said the decision means the world's biggest trading bloc will have a single money, the European currency unit, underpinning its single market of 340 million consumers. European Economics Commissioner Henning Christensen said: "I think it will be a big step toward the completion of the European Community." But the summit, overshadowed by the accelerating break-up of the Soviet Union, gave the EC world power commensurate with its economic weight. Germany said it will only sacrifice the powerful Deutschmark in exchange for a major stride towards European political integration.

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جوردان تايمز يومية سياسية مستقلة عن المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية الراية

3 killed in helicopter crash

AMMAN (Petra) — Three air force officers died when a Royal Jordanian Air Force helicopter crashed Monday during night flying exercises, the Royal Jordanian Air Force announced Monday. The dead were identified as Captain Tayseer Salem Al Zaid, Lieutenant Sadek Mohammad Al-Haq and Lt. Munir Hassan Fakhri. No further details were immediately available.

Arab League delays Lockerbie meeting

CAIRO (R) — Arab League Secretary-General Esmat Abdul Meguid said the 21-member body postponed a scheduled meeting Monday to discuss the Lockerbie bombing. Dr. Abdul Meguid told reporters Egypt, which has been mediating between Libya and the West, requested the delay "to allow more time for consultation." Monday's session was expected to discuss British criticism of the league's support for Libya following a meeting last week of the permanent representatives.

Syria expels Nazi hunter

PARIS (R) — Nazi hunter Beate Klarsfeld was expelled from Syria Monday after being arrested while protesting the government's alleged harbouring of a Nazi war criminal, the French Foreign Ministry said. Mrs. Klarsfeld was arrested in Damascus after demonstrating in front of the Syrian Interior Ministry against the reported presence in Syria of Alois Brunner, Brunner, former chief of transit camp in Drancy, France, was convicted in absentia for "crimes against humanity" for his role in deporting 120,000 people during World War II.

Maxwell autopsy finds no positive death cause

MADRID (R) — Pathologists who carried out the autopsy on publisher Robert Maxwell's body were unable to find conclusive proof of what caused his death last month, a knowledgeable source said Monday. The final autopsy report says Mr. Maxwell, who had coronary artery disease, most likely fell overboard after suffering a heart attack on the deck of his yacht, according to the source. Neither suicide nor drowning could be ruled out, said the source. The document is now in the hands of an investigating magistrate in the Canary Islands. The autopsy results only suggest a cause of death, the source said. "Can it be assumed that's what it is? No... it's the most probable hypothesis."

Turkish troops kill two Kurds

ANKARA (R) — Turkish troops killed two Kurdish guerrillas Monday in a clash in eastern Turkey, the semi-official Anatolian news agency said. It said the Kurds, who are members of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), took place near Alacakaya town in Elaziz province.

Iraq to reduce military service

BAGHDAD (R) — Iraq is reducing from three to two years the period of compulsory military service for university graduates, Iraqi newspapers reported. The government's Al Jumhuriyah newspaper said the amendments included cutting the period of national service for graduates. It also said Baghdad would raise from 18 to 19 the age at which non-students would be pressed into service.

Bonn denies German parts in Iraqi Scuds

BONN (R) — None of the Scud missiles fired by Iraq during the Gulf war contained parts made by German firms, a Foreign Ministry spokesman said Monday. He was responding to reports from the United States, quoting a U.N. study, that German firms had provided equipment for Baghdad's missile programme.

Bilaterals resume today; Arabs confident of tackling substance despite Israeli stalling tactics

Washington session could continue beyond Friday

From Jordan Times Staff Reporters in Washington

ARAB-ISRAELI bilateral talks resume today after a delay of one week marked by heated wrangling and bickering over procedural issues and whether the negotiations will deal with substance this time around.

Having failed to show up for the American-scheduled Dec. 4 talks, the Israeli delegations have finally arrived and said they are ready to start talks Tuesday.

The Israelis, however, have indicated that they would insist on talking procedure before substance and that they would not stay in the U.S. capital beyond Friday.

According to some reports the Israeli delegations, which arrived here Sunday, contend that they are only assigned a limited mandate to reach agreement with the Arabs on another venue for bilateral talks and they would leave by Friday regardless of progress

or lack of it in the talks.

Arab delegates nevertheless sounded optimistic yesterday that the Israeli delegation will in fact enter negotiations on substantive issues, including a possible Palestinian self-rule and will remain in Washington at least until some real progress is made.

Other than bickering over whether the negotiations should continue to be based in the U.S. capital, the Israelis are making a big issue of the two separate rooms that the State Department has made available for Jordanian-Israeli and Palestinian-Israeli talks.

According to Israeli-sourced reports, the Israelis have told U.S. officials that the "separate-rooms" arrangement is unacceptable and that negotiations would not get off the ground unless the second room is closed.

By doing this, the Israelis meant to send the message that they would talk to the Palestinians only under Jordanian auspices — a condition rejected by both the Jordanian and Palestinian sides.

According to Arab delegates, "a principle has been adopted that

separation has to be established because the two teams have separate identities and agendas."

"It is not a matter of tactics," a well-informed Arab delegate told the Jordan Times. "This is a matter of principle. The Jordanians will not negotiate the Palestinian agenda on their behalf. They have to be separated when negotiating with the Israelis."

"The problem is not the number of rooms," another Jordanian delegate explained. "The Jordanians provided an umbrella to the Palestinian delegation to facilitate their participation in a conference aimed at finding a solution to their problem. The umbrella was not provided so that we would negotiate on their behalf."

"When it comes to the actual conduct of negotiations the two (Palestinian and Jordanian) teams have to negotiate separately," the delegate said.

The new snag began when the advance teams of Arab delegations went to the State Department just before the Dec. 4 date for bilateral talks to inspect the rooms designated for the bilateral talks and found that

there were only three rooms for the Syrians, Lebanese and the joint delegation.

"We then made the request that the joint delegation be separated into two rooms during the negotiations and the Americans accepted," an Arab delegate recounted.

In the negotiations with U.S. Secretary of State James Baker prior to the opening of peace talks in Madrid, it was agreed, according to informed sources, that the joint delegation would commence its bilateral talks as a joint delegation but would later split into two separate negotiating teams.

"We considered the first bilateral meeting in Madrid with the Israelis as the one which we would attend jointly," a Jordanian delegate said.

"Now we expect that substantive negotiations should be conducted with two separate delegations as agreed upon with the co-sponsors before we entered the peace talks," he added.

After the Americans complied with the Arab request, the delegations entered the State Department from

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OIC summit opens in Dakar

King addresses Islamic meeting today

DAKAR (Agencies) — Officials from 45 Muslim countries opened a summit Monday with denunciations of Iraq and calls for their Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC) to seek a powerful niche in the new world order.

Outgoing Chairman Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmad Al Sabah, the Emir of Kuwait, opened the conference's sixth summit by assailing Iraq for invading his country, "a fellow Muslim nation, in total disregard of the Islamic concept of never using force to resolve disputes."

Iraq is boycotting the four-day conference, at which about 20 delegations are led by heads of state.

President Abdou Diouf of Senegal, the incoming conference chairman, joined Sheikh Jaber in praising God for influencing the Western powers to liberate Kuwait.

Gambian President Sir Dawda Jawara called for renewed solidarity among the world's one billion Muslims to ensure no repetition of "the most shocking incident" to rock the Islamic World. He spoke of the "massive destruction and human tragedy" caused by Baghdad.

The conference called for Iraq to comply with U.N. resolutions on war reparations and destruction of its war machinery.

The speakers welcomed the initiative taken by the United States and the Soviet Union that led to a first round of Middle East peace talks in Madrid.

"It will be a long and tortuous road, but never before has there been such hope for a resolution," Mr. Diouf said. Compromise should be encouraged but any peace plan must include the return to Palestinians of territories occupied by Israel, he said. There was a round of applause indicating solidarity with the Palestinian people and Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat, who is attending the meeting.

"There can be no real lasting peace without the full participation of the PLO," Mr. Jawara said.

Notable absentees included King Fahd of Saudi Arabia, President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt, President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali of Tunisia.

The absence of major leaders left the field open to Iran, whose President Hashemi Rafsanjani prepared to play a leading role.

His Majesty King Hussein, who is leading the Jordanian delegation, received Monday at his residence in Dakar Moroccan Prime Minister Izzeddin Al Iraqi, who heads the Moroccan delegation to the summit.

Discussion during the meeting centered on the importance of the OIC parley hosted by Senegal, particularly that it is the first time an OIC summit is held in an African Muslim country.

King Hussein and the Moroccan premier exchanged views on the ongoing efforts to resolve the Palestinian problem and settle the Arab-Israeli conflict in a just and permanent manner on the basis of international legitimacy.

The meeting was attended on the Jordanian side by Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker, Royal Court Chief Adnan Abu Odeh, the King's Military Secretary Prince Talal Ben Mohammed, and on the Moroccan side by Minister of State for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation among Maghreb states Abdul Latif Kiani. King Hussein visited Algerian President Chadli Benjedid at his residence in the Senegalese capital.

The two leaders stressed the importance of holding the OIC summit

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Nothing less than freeze in settlement will be a breakthrough — Sharif

By P.V. Vivekanand Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The bottom line that Jordan would consider as a tangible breakthrough in Arab-Israeli peace talks is a freeze in Israel's settlement activity in the occupied territories, Information Minister Mahmoud Sharif said Monday.

"If the Israelis are serious for peace, then they can show it by a freeze (of Jewish) settlement (in the occupied territories)," said Mr. Sharif in an informal meeting with foreign journalists.

Asked whether the demand for a halt to Israel's settlement activity was a "condition" to pursue peace talks with the Jewish state, the minister said: "It is not a condition. It is only common sense."

Mr. Sharif pointed out that the Israeli settlements in the occupied territories were "an important element in the continuation of the peace process" since land for peace is the basis for the peace negotiations.

"They are swallowing (Arab) land day by day and this is not acceptable," he told the journalists in the first such encounter after he assumed office two months ago. "Quite soon there will not be any land to talk about. No land (means) no peace."

Israel has rebuffed every call for a halt to its dedicated drive to settle the occupied territories as a gesture of goodwill against the backdrop of the peace process, which was launched in Madrid with a U.S.-Soviet sponsored

peace conference Oct. 30.

The Palestinians, who are attending peace talks with Israel in a joint delegation with Jordan, have repeatedly affirmed that one of their first priorities is to ensure a freeze in settlements in the occupied territories.

Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir said last month after talks in Washington that the issue of settlements could be on the negotiating table, but he ruled out any move to halt settlement activities in the occupied territories.

Mr. Shamir, the first-ever Jordanian information minister with decades of experience in journalism, disagreed with a suggestion that Jordan felt "betrayed" by the obvious American reluctance to adopt a firm position in last week's wrangle over the Dec. 4 date for the resumption of Arab-Israeli bilateral peace talks in Washington.

"I would not describe it that way," he said. "We had hoped that the U.S. would be more forthcoming in dealing with Israel's delaying tactics regarding the meeting in Washington."

However, the minister said, "this does not mean or represent any retraction from the American commitment to the peace process."

"We do not see this as a slowing down on Washington's commitment."

Israel, in protest over what it described as American efforts to discriminate in the Middle East negotiations, turned down the Dec. 4 date



Mahmoud Sharif

set by the U.S. and the Soviet Union and managed to delay the talks until Tuesday.

The U.S. obviously anxious not to antagonize its long-time Middle East ally played down the dispute and was seen as not only letting Israel have its way but also going out of its way to appease the Jewish state and dilute adverse media impact against it.

Mr. Sharif said Jordan's strained relations with some of the Arab countries in the wake of the 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait were on the mind. "There is a certain improvement in our relations with Egypt," a leader of the anti-Iraq Arab camp which Jordan did not join, Mr. Sharif said, recalling that His Majesty King Hussein and Hosni Mubarak had exchanged messages through envoys who visited Cairo and Amman in the last 15 days. "Further steps are needed" for a total reconciliation, but

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Shamir maintains tough line

TEL AVIV (R) — Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir said Monday Israel may negotiate some issues directly with Palestinians in the next round of Middle East peace talks but opposed any move to split the Jordanian-Palestinian delegation.

"There has to be a dialogue on it. They have to submit grounds. Maybe they will persuade us," he said when asked if there was a possibility the Israelis would negotiate with Palestinians outside the framework of the joint delegation.

In the past Mr. Shamir has insisted on the joint delegation in order to avoid granting Palestinians the status of an independent entity.

The prime minister, speaking to reporters after addressing parliament's foreign affairs and defence committee, indicated that any direct Israeli-Palestinian negotiations might come at the subcommittee level.

"At the previous meeting in Madrid it was stated there would be subcommittees in the negotiations... so we have to discuss their composition," Mr. Shamir said.

But Mr. Shamir reiterated his

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U.S. media refocusing limelight on Mideast talks

By Ghadeer Taber Special to the Jordan Times

WASHINGTON — On the eve of the resumption of Arab-Israeli bilateral negotiations Tuesday, the U.S. media appear to be refocusing interest in the issue of Mideast peace after relegating it last week to the third or fourth item on television broadcasts and to the inside pages of newspapers.

On Sunday, Secretary of State James Baker made his first media appearance on the CBS programme "Face the Nation" after he remained conspicuously absent from the process throughout the week as he hit a real snag over date and venue. Cable News Network (CNN) Sunday aired an interview with adviser to the Palestinian delegation Ghasan Khatib and Israeli Ambassador Zelman Shoval while the high-profile programme "This Week With David Brinkley" broadcast an interview with possible presidential candidate Pat Buchanan who stressed putting American national interests above those of Israel.

Attempts to explain the scant U.S. media coverage of the Middle East peace process have found little middle ground between pro-Arab "conspiracy theorists" who feel pro-Israeli

influence dominates the media, and pro-Israeli apologists saying Americans were simply not interested.

The talks, which were officially scheduled to begin Dec. 4 in the American capital, but were delayed by Israel, barely received any front-page coverage in major newspapers or television time on the three major television networks.

"Conspiracy theorists" argue that there was a premeditated and carefully-orchestrated campaign by the U.S. media and administration to downplay the event to spare Israel the embarrassment of being absent on the scheduled opening day of the second round of Arab-Israeli bilateral talks after the Arab delegations showed up on the scheduled date.

Defenders of the media coverage say that this argument is "ridiculous" and that the peace talks were overshadowed by more important domestic stories. Not one major newspaper in the country gave the story a front-page slot and only one of the major television networks featured the story in its nightly news programme. Even CNN, which brought the Gulf war and the Madrid peace conference to

(Continued on page 2)

Only Jews and Arabs interested in bilaterals

By Ruben Castaneda

Enter Santos's shoe shine customers aren't talking about it. Neither are the folks who come in for haircuts at the Early Bird Barber Shop on Ninth Street NW. It's not on the conversation menu at Joe & Mo's restaurant. Nor a wof has been heard about it from the patrons — human or canine — of the Dog Wash in the Blagden Alley neighbourhood in Northwest.

The second round of the historic Mideast peace conference, which began at the State Department Wednesday minus, at least, until Monday, the Israeli contingent, has been greeted by much of Washington with a less than historic response.

Though interest in the talks is high among many in the local Jewish and Arab communities, the high-stakes peace process begun in Madrid in late October has barely registered a blip on the radar screen of many Washingtonians.

Santos works a shoe shine stand in the National Capital YMCA at the 17th Street and Rhode Island Avenue NW. Most of his customers are downtown professionals. Many chat with him about politics, such as the political odyssey of former Klausman David Duke, crime and the fortunes of the Redskins, Santos said.

No one, however, has said a

word about the peace talks. Santos said.

Like several of the nearly 20 people interviewed, Santos admitted that he was only vaguely aware of the talks and didn't know they were being held in Washington.

At the Early Bird Barber Shop in the Shaw neighbourhood, the talk lately has been about "drugs," the "Man," and (the property of) high-speed police chases," said barber George Mitchell. And, of course, the Redskins, Mitchell said. "That's all they talk about, those damn Redskins."

Asked this week how much he knew about the peace talks, Lynda Wright, owner of the Dog Wash, said, "I haven't paid much attention. I know they were supposed to start, and Israel will not be there at the start." None of her customers — the dog owners, that is — and none of her friends have talked about the issue either, Wright said.

There was a little more excitement — at least for one evening — over at the Grand Hotel, the base for the Palestinian delegation. Wednesday night, a dozen members of the Jewish Committee for Israeli-Palestinian Peace welcomed members of the delegation — including Elias Freij, the mayor of Bethlehem — to the peace talks.

"It has been a long period of

(Continued on page 2)

Iraqi national airline to fly again

BAGHDAD (R) — Iraq said Monday it would resume internal flights of its grounded national airline next month for the first time since the Gulf war. The Iraqi News Agency (INA) said Baghdad had received approval for the flights from the U.N. Security Council Committee that oversees sweeping trade sanctions imposed on Iraq for its August 1990 invasion of Kuwait. INA quoted Iraqi Airways' Director-General Nouredin Al Safi as saying flights would resume on Jan. 15 between Baghdad and the Iraqi second city of Basra, 600 kilometres south of the capital, using planes already in Iraq. Mr. Safi did not mention flights to the northern city of Mosul, the other domestic route for Iraqi Airways Boeing 707s. Baghdad has appealed repeatedly for the Sanctions Committee to allow the return of 33 of its aircraft stranded abroad since they were flown out of the country for sanctuary just hours before the Gulf war began last February 17. The Security Council's Sanctions Committee recently approved a humanitarian flight by the airline to carry meat from Sudan to Baghdad. Mr. Safi said a government-owned company had been awarded a contract to repair the domestic Al Muthana airport, which was heavily damaged in the war.

Iraq appeals to West to unfreeze funds for food

BAGHDAD (R) — Iraq, saying U.S. bombing in the Gulf war destroyed close to a billion dollars worth of food stocks, is appealing to the West to unlock its money so it can feed its people.

"The situation is critical — I think that is what you want to hear," Trade Minister Mohammad Mehdi Saleh told foreign journalists late on Sunday, two days after the U.N. Security Council began a periodic review of trade sanctions against Iraq.

Mr. Saleh said U.S. raids on what Washington called military installations had destroyed nine food warehouses containing \$850 million worth of frozen chicken and meat as well as flour, sugar, cooking oil and tinned baby milk powder.

"The tins are still there. We insisted on keeping them there," he said, showing reporters a photograph of mountains of twisted metal in a destroyed milk warehouse in Iraq's southern Al Qadisiyah province.

The 4,000 tonnes of powdered formula would have been enough to feed all of Iraq's infants for two months, Mr. Saleh said.

He said another 2,000 tonnes of baby milk bound for Iraq had been sitting at a Turkish port since the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait 16 months ago. Some of that milk has passed the expiration date, Mr. Saleh said.

"We can rebuild the warehouses but we can't fill them again," the minister said, inaugurating an exhibit of the destroyed stocks.

Millions of Iraqis under the grip of a sweeping U.N. trade ban slapped on Iraq after the August 1990 invasion of Kuwait are sur-

viving on government food rations costing Baghdad between \$90 million and \$100 million a month.

Iraq, which has rejected a United Nations plan to sell oil under international supervision to raise funds, wants access to money from its \$4 billion in foreign assets frozen by governments after the invasion (see page 2).

"Supergun destroyed"

Iraq has destroyed its fabled supergun, the "Doomsday" weapon built to lob shells more than 1,000 kilometres, says a U.N. witness.

Iraq chilled the world with disclosures that it possessed the biggest gun in any arsenal, able to hit Israel and other Middle East targets at will.

United Nations expert Patrice Palanque said before leaving Iraq Monday that he watched the weapon's destruction.

So ended a thriller saga that unfolded dramatically in Europe in April, 1990 with the seizure of giant steel pipes that Iraq insisted were part of an oil pipeline.

Mr. Palanque said he supervised the final. "With this mission all that Iraq has declared of its ballistic missile capability has been destroyed," he said.

He said his 11-member arms inspection team had verified the dismantling of the 1,000-mm calibre gun at a site in Iskandariyah, 50 kilometres south of Baghdad, during their week-long stay.

The last step involved destroying the recoil springs in the huge gun. Iraq had already cut three 350-mm guns into small pieces.

Sheikh Obeid appeals for prisoner swap

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Kidnapped Lebanese cleric Sheikh Abdul Karim Obeid has called for a prisoner swap to include himself and missing Israeli airman Ron Arad.

"I appeal... in the name of brotherhood and in the name of humanity to... this person who holds the pilot, to remember that we and the pilot have children whom we do not see at all," Sheikh Obeid said in an interview broadcast on Israeli Arabic television news on Monday night.

Sheikh Obeid is a member of the pro-Iranian Hizbollah (Party of God) which earlier accused Israel of blackmail by demanding the return of its missing servicemen before freeing Lebanese prisoners.

Sheikh Obeid called on his followers to release all prisoners, not just Western hostages.

"Everybody, all the hostages, must go to their homes..." A high-ranking official of Hizbollah said Monday: "It does not hold missing Arad and Israel has no excuse to keep holding Lebanese prisoners after the release of all American and British hostages."

"The question of the hostages is over," said Sheikh Naim Kasseem, deputy secretary-general of the Iranian-backed Hizbollah.

"Israel has no more excuses for procrastination, for keeping the issue of prisoners suspended," Sheikh Kasseem said in remarks broadcast by Hizbollah's Al Noor radio station.

Iran said working to free German hostages

TEHRAN (R) — Iran is working hard for the release of two kidnapped German aid workers, the last Western hostages held in Lebanon, the Tehran Times said Monday.

The paper, frequently well-informed on Western issues, said "fresh developments" could result from an Iranian minister's visit to Bonn in the coming days.

A Muslim leader in Lebanon said Sunday the German captives, Thomas Kempster and Heinrich Struwig, would be freed by the end of the month under a deal involving two Lebanese brothers jailed in Germany.

But Bonn denied any deal to free Abbas and Mohammad Ali Hamadi, jailed for murder, kidnapping and hijacking.

The Tehran daily, accurate in the past on hostage issues, said Iran's ambassador in Germany, Hossein Mousavian, had returned to Tehran and met President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani over "new initiatives for the release of the German hostages."

It did not spell out the initiative, but added: "The official but not pre-planned trip to Germany by Deputy Foreign Minister Mahmood Vaezi within the coming days seems to open up brighter prospects."

"Thus the coming days could possibly bring in news of fresh developments in this connection."

Since August, nine Western captives have been freed in a push by the United Nations to free all hostages in Lebanon in return for Arab prisoners held by Israel.

Keen to end its international

isolation, Iran used its influence with Lebanon's Islamic fundamentalist groups to end a kidnapping saga.

The Iranian government has been placed in a particularly difficult position by constant pressures from the German government.

"Iran favours the release of all hostages, but emotional and psychological aspects of this particular affair make it difficult for Iran to pressure a family whose son is condemned to life imprisonment," the English-language paper added.

Mohammad Ali Hamadi was sentenced to life for murder and hijacking in connection with the 1985 hijack of a TWA jet to Beirut in which a U.S. navy diver was host held.

Abbas was jailed for kidnapping two other Germans in Lebanon to win his brother's release.

The Germans are the last remaining Westerners held by Iranian militants in Lebanon. Iran played a central role in the release of American and British hostages under a swap brokered by United Nations Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar.

"Iran will do its utmost in view of the fact that Tehran-Bonn ties are at the height of cordiality, not at all comparable with its relations with England and USA," the Tehran Times said.

Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Ali Mohammad Besharati told German Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher Wednesday that Tehran had assured the kidnappers Bonn would find a way to release the Hamadis if the two Germans were free, the Iranian news agency (IRNA) reported.

Baker: U.S. 'might well' have let Israel-Iran deal

WASHINGTON (R) — Secretary of State James Baker said Sunday that the United States "might well" have allowed Israel to sell Iranian-made arms and spare parts worth billions of dollars from early 1981 onwards.

Asked to comment on a New York Times report that Washington abruptly changed its policy to make the sales possible, Mr. Baker said on U.S. television:

"I don't know, that it's true... I don't have any recollection... it might well have happened as far as I know."

The New York Times report, quoting senior Reagan administration officials and Israeli officials, said the flow of arms began a few months after Iran released the American hostages seized at the U.S. embassy in Tehran in 1979.

The hostages were freed on January 1981 on the day President Ronald Reagan took office. Mr. Baker was White House chief of staff at the time.

The secretary of state, pressed to confirm the report, said, "It might very well be the case that we had decided to do that as a favour to Israel, because Israel would earn, I suppose, some money from selling those parts."

"We do cooperate with Israel on matters such as this," he added. Asked how it was that he was not sure whether it happened, he said "A lot of things happened over that four-year period, some of which I knew about and some of which I didn't. I don't have a recollection."

"The secretary of state is the person, as I understand it, who is empowered to approve export of technology such as that... that doesn't mean it would necessarily have come to the president's attention but it might very well have," he added.

The secretary of state at the time was Alexander Haig. The New York Times quoted an adviser to Mr. Haig as denying the former secretary of state authorised arms shipments from Israel to Iran.

The newspaper said the United States specifically authorised the sales for between six and 18 months.

Iran badly needed the arms,

ammunition and spare parts to replenish and repair the predominantly U.S.-made arsenal it was using in its war with Iraq.

The newspaper said that Mr. Haig and former Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin worked out the agreement in 1981 and the Reagan administration rescinded it in 1982.

In the mid-1980s the Reagan administration made a secret agreement with Iran to exchange U.S. arms for American hostages held by the Iranian groups in Lebanon.

The New York Times said it could not establish an American rationale for the change of policy. But it said disclosure of the Reagan administration's agreement with Israel comes as the U.S. Congress prepares to begin an investigation into allegations that Reagan campaign officials made a deal with Iran for the release of the hostages after the November 1980 U.S. presidential election.

That alleged, but unproved, scenario has become known as the "October surprise."

The New York Times said interviews carried out over the last three months have found no link between the Israeli arms sales to Iran and such an "October surprise" scenario.

Singapore firm under probe

The United States is investigating a Singapore company for alleged involvement in illegal arms sales to Iran in the 1980s, a U.S. embassy official said.

The official said Singapore-incorporated Aero Systems Private Limited had been indicted by a U.S. court for selling U.S.-made military aircraft and missile parts to Iran. The company is a subsidiary of a Miami-based Aero Systems Inc.

The U.S. official declined to elaborate, while officials of Aero Systems in Singapore were not available for comment.

The Straits Times newspaper said on Monday the parts were allegedly smuggled to Iran between 1984 and 1987 disguised as commercial aircraft parts and with the end-users' names falsified.

Several of the alleged sales were shipped to Iranian agents in Hong Kong, the newspaper said.

Arafat accuses Soviets, U.S. of favouring Israel

NICOSIA (R) — Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat has Sunday accused Moscow of backing Israel in Middle East peace talks but singled out Washington as the main culprit.

In a message marking the fourth anniversary of the start of the Palestinian uprising, the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) chairman called on Palestinians to escalate their struggle.

"We know that the co-sponsors of the (Middle East peace) conference are pampering the Zionist enemy, especially America which treats him as an ally and a friend," he said.

The United States and Soviet Union are joint sponsors of the talks, due to resume in Washington Tuesday.

"We know that this Zionist enemy has allies and friends in Washington and he is the spoiled son of the subsequent American governments... and more than that (America) is not the decent referee in this difficult and dangerous match," Mr. Arafat said.

He accused Washington of sid-

ing with Israel by seeking repeal of a United Nations resolution equating Zionism with racism, refusing visas to advisors accompanying the Palestinian delegation, and not giving delegates the same facilities they had at the first round in Madrid.

He urged Washington and Moscow to shoulder their responsibilities and stop applying double standards.

"What is going on now in Washington puts the United States before an important test to prove its credibility," he said.

"We once again assert in this political round of the settlement process in Washington that there will be no peace other than the Palestinian will, and no security unless it passes through the security of our people and the Arab Nation," he said.

We went to Washington realising the difficult situation and we did not go for a picnic... but we went to stress our position towards peace and justice even though we might not find this peace or this justice," he said.

Only Jews, Arabs give attention

(Continued from page 1)

darkness between us," said Kay Elfant, a committee member. Freij and Elfant lit candles in a menorah for the fourth night of Hanukkah.

At noon today, members of the Palestinian delegation are scheduled to visit the Community for Creative Non-Violence, a shelter for the homeless, to show solidarity with homeless people, said Ahmed Saif, a spokesman for the delegation.

But events such as those involving interaction between the delegations and Washingtonians have been the exception so far.

People offer several theories as to why the talks have not captured widespread attention locally.

"Washingtonians are so used to high-level politics that it's the norm for us, not like it would be in Waterloo, Iowa," said Mo Sussman, owner of Joe & Mo's, a popular Connecticut Avenue restaurant.

Murray Tenenbaum, executive director of the Jewish Community Council of Greater Washington, said the peace talks have been a hot topic of conversation among many of his Jewish friends and

colleagues. But he said he was not surprised that it was not as popular among non-Jews and non-Arabs.

"Many Americans are focused on the economy and domestic issues, worried about their next paycheck," he said.

Jim Zogby, executive director of the Arab-American Institute, said he and his colleagues and friends of Arab descent have been following the process intently.

"When the talks occurred in Madrid, people got up in the wee hours to watch it," on CNN Zogby said.

There is a sense of pride among many Arab-Americans about the way the Arab delegations acquitted themselves at Madrid, and a sense of excitement about their presence in Washington, he said.

Zogby also dismissed theories on the lack of excitement about the talks; he said there is no outpouring of interest because the Israeli delegation has yet to arrive and there were no substantive talks.

If the Israelis had come to the table when the other delegations did, "there definitely would have been a buzz," he said. — The Washington Post.

Islamic summit opens in Dakar

(Continued from page 1)

at this critical stage in the history of Arabs, Muslims and the entire world. King Hussein and Mr. Benjedid affirmed that holding the summit in Senegal gives a chance for building and bolstering cooperation among Arab states in the Arab World and Africa.

The two leaders exchanged views on the Middle East peace process and the need to solve the Palestinian problem on the basis of international legitimacy.

Discussed at the meeting was also the democratisation process in Jordan and Algeria. King Hussein and Mr. Benjedid affirmed the need to continue the process and safeguard it so as to engage the Jordanian and Algerian peoples in the process of decision-making in their countries.

They also called for meeting the fancies between Arab states, especially at a time when blocs in other parts of the world are being created.

The meeting was attended on the Jordanian side by Shaikh Zaki, Mr. Abu Odeh and Prince Talal. On the Algerian side it was attended by Foreign Minister Ali Akhbar Al Benhmi.

Following the meeting King Hussein said in a statement:

"It is a big Arab and Islamic meeting and it was our duty to participate in it. I cannot predict its results but I hope it will carry positive results on the long way towards our goals and purposes in achieving legitimate amongst ourselves."

King Hussein will deliver an address at the conference Tuesday morning. The address will deal with Arab and Islamic issues as well as the basis for consolidating Islamic solidarity to confront the current challenges.

view that he was confident that Syria would attend the multilateral talks, scheduled to be held in Moscow Jan. 28-29, despite its declared stand that it would be futile to join such negotiations unless progress was achieved in the bilateral.

The philosophy that Jordan applies in relations with other Arab countries, Mr. Sharif said, is that "we are facing challenges that can be dealt with not on a national level but on a pan-Arab level which requires intense Arab consultations and coordination."

"We are pushing in these channels," added Mr. Sharif, who is also handling the foreign affairs portfolio in the absence of Foreign Minister Kamel Abu Jaber, who is in Dakar attending the Islamic summit.

Mr. Sharif, who quit as chief of staff of Jordan's Al Dastur Arab League daily in October before becoming minister of information, described Wednesday's meeting with the journalists as an attempt at familiarising himself with the foreign press corps in the Kingdom.

U.S. media refocusing limelight

(Continued from page 1)

the living rooms of millions of viewers around the world, only briefly mentioned the event.

Arab delegations arrived in the American capital expecting to receive the kind of saturation media coverage they got in Madrid in October when they met with Israel for the U.S.-Soviet-sponsored Middle East peace conference. They also expected to score public relations points by appearing at the State Department at 10:00 a.m. Wednesday to demonstrate their willingness to talk, thus casting Israel as intransigent.

To the dismay of the Arab delegations and the delight of the Israeli embassy, the State Department also did not make an issue of the Israeli absence and refrained from strongly censoring Tel Aviv for its snub.

Almost as "bad" as the State Department's restraint, newspapers and television lost interest in the peace process rather quickly. Arab delegates observed. News was dominated by the state of the U.S. economy, the release of the last American hostage, the rape trial of William Kennedy Smith and the forces of conservatism of John Sununu, who is of Arab descent.

"I can understand that the Israelis had not been in town and the talks have not really begun," said Jordanian delegate and spokesman Marwan Muasher.

But still we expected more coverage on the issue, especially that it is historic and in the U.S. capital."

Many Arab delegates and journalists contend that the media, which has many Israeli supporters in its ranks, purposely relegated the event to save Israel from what promised to be a public relations nightmare if television cameras had been allowed to show the empty chairs of Israeli delegates at the negotiating table.

The U.S. government, they say, also played a role in downplaying the story by making only mild statements after Tel Aviv clearly snubbed the administration by not showing up on the U.S.-proposed date.

Secretary Baker, who devoted nine months of efforts to bring the Arabs and Israelis to the table and was very much in the limelight in Madrid, was conspicuously missing this week from the process leaving

the reins of intricate diplomacy to his aides.

"If President Bush or Secretary Baker made statements about Israel's absence, then definitely there would have been more coverage by the U.S. media," one veteran Arab journalist said. "It is the case of the chicken and egg in the case of the administration and the media concerning who makes the news," he added.

"But could you imagine if Syria had not shown on Dec. 4 and Israel did... the media would have had a field day," the journalist said.

American journalists defending their coverage of the event say that although interest in the talks is high among many in the Arab and Jewish communities, most average Americans are preoccupied with the faltering economy and the other kind of issues that "sell newspapers."

"Many Americans are focusing their attention on the economy, and the peace talks were simply overtaken by events," said Boston Globe State Department correspondent Mary Curran.

"The talks really did not begin... when they do next week there is substance there will be more coverage," added Mr. Curran, who is of Arab descent.

Supporting the argument that Americans are not interested in the process, a Washington Post report, based on 20 interviews with Washingtonians, said most were vaguely aware of the talks and others did not even know they were being held in the U.S. capital (see adjacent story).

In a popular hamburger restaurant in Georgetown, customers were seen studying the rape trial of William Kennedy Smith and when a patron was asked by the Jordan Times about his opinion on the Middle East peace process he said: "Of course I know they are taking place here in town and that Israel has not yet attended by you know it would much more interesting if there was a bit of violence involved... such as somebody beating up the Israeli ambassador."

A Pakistani taxi driver acknowledged that the media were "dominated by the Jews." He quipped: "You think the Israelis occupy Palestine? You may be interested to know that they also occupy Washington."

Iraq settles in for winter of sanctions

BAGHDAD (R) — A defiant Iraq is settling in for a winter of United Nations sanctions, certain that time will erode international will behind the crippling trade ban.

Baghdad, expecting sanctions to be extended after a periodic review this week and rejecting a U.N. oil-sale plan to fund food imports, is trying to dampen its people's hopes the embargo imposed after the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait will be eased.

"I had a dream that the sanctions will be lifted. I think it will be very soon," said 70-year-old Saleman, whose two-year-old grandson goes without milk under the embargo.

The price of eggs in Baghdad's well-stocked if costly markets fell by 25 per cent last week on rumours the Security Council would lift the sweeping sanctions gripping Iraq's poor.

Prices have gone back up again but Iraqis cling to the belief that the world will not continue sanctions while Iraqi children were dying of hunger and disease.

"We have been trying to prepare the people for the last few days. We do not want them to be surprised," an Iraqi official said in explaining recent government statements that it expected no favours from the Security Council.

U.N. officials have complained that Baghdad is not fully cooperating with its ceasefire mandate to find and destroy weapons facilities. The government's part in unrest in the Kurdish north also continues to worry the West.

Iraqi officials and ordinary citizens appear convinced that U.S. President George Bush, a driving force behind the U.N. embargo, will be out of the White House before President Saddam's government loses its grip on power.

Iraq has rejected a U.N. plan

to sell oil under supervision to raise money for food and medicine, saying the scheme would strip Baghdad of its sovereignty and leave it with only enough money for a few months of supplies.

"We would rather die than those lose our dignity," said Mrs. Saleman, sitting outside U.N. headquarters. She said her two-year-old grandson was drinking water because only children under one were eligible for government rations of baby milk.

Powdered milk on the open market, the only reliable source, now costs between 75 and 80 dinars for five kilograms, half a month's wages for many Iraqis.

The price translates to up to \$8 at black market rates which have made a mockery of the official rate, which makes a dinar worth more than \$3.

The Security Council bans Iraqi exports and allows the import of humanitarian supplies but Baghdad says the money it needs to pay for food and medicine is frozen in bank accounts around the world.

Britain last month agreed to release \$125 million in Iraqi funds after Baghdad freed businessman Ian Richter, jailed in 1986 for alleged bribery. Diplomats said Sweden has agreed to unfreeze assets to buy medicine but has not yet done so.

"The situation on the nutritional side and the health side is sliding downwards," said one Baghdad-based diplomat.

Diplomats said popular support for the government would remain so long as it continued a ration programme that provides about one third of people's basic needs.

"The rationing is absolutely essential and the government is working extremely hard to keep it," one diplomat said.

MIDDLE EAST NEWS IN BRIEF

U.N. ballistic inspectors head for Iraq

BAHRAIN (R) — U.N. weapons inspectors headed for Baghdad Monday on a mission expected to include searches for concealed Scud missiles and ballistic materials. Team leader Colonel Vigar Aabach declined to give details of his agenda before departing from Bahrain, the field headquarters for all U.N. teams mandated to find and destroy Iraq's weapons of mass destruction. U.N. officials say his inspection, the last scheduled for 1991, is likely to involve visits to undeclared ballistic missile sites to search for any material which might have escaped the notice of previous teams.

Another team of ballistic inspectors were due to return from Iraq Monday after a verifying whether Iraqi authorities had finished destroying the country's remaining declared Scud missile launch pads and superguns. U.N. officials said in October that after this task was complete, all Iraq's known ballistic missiles and launchers would have been eliminated. Western analysts believe there are discrepancies in the number of Scud missiles declared by Iraqi authorities and Baghdad may still have about 200 Scuds. Mr. Aabach, a Norwegian, said his 29-member team would spend 12 days in Iraq. His is the 24th team sent to the country to ensure Iraqi compliance with U.N. ceasefire resolutions.

GCC chief invited to Iran

BAHRAIN (R) — Iran has invited Abdullah Bishara, secretary-general of the six-nation Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) to visit Tehran, the Bahrain-based Gulf News Agency (GNA) said Sunday. GNA said Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister Ali Mohammad Besharati delivered the invitation in Riyadh during a meeting with senior GCC officials. There were no further details. Ties between Iran and GCC members Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates have improved dramatically as a result of Iran's neutral stand during the Gulf crisis. The GCC backed Iraq with billions of dollars during its 1980-88 war with Iran. Iran's news agency (IRNA) said last week King Fahd of Saudi Arabia had renewed an invitation to President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani to visit the kingdom.

U.S. paratroops, Kuwaitis exercise

KUWAIT (R) — Hundreds of U.S. paratroops staged an assault training exercise with Kuwait Sunday, over nine months since Gulf allied troops ousted Iraqis from the emirate. At least one U.S. ranger was injured on the first day of the manoeuvres which were almost cancelled because of strong winds. The Pentagon has said the five-day war games, the second joint training manoeuvres in Kuwait in a month, will include some 900 U.S. army, marine, navy and air force personnel. High winds marked the first day involving seven C-141 planes carrying 550 U.S. airborne ranger light infantry soldiers. Details of the ranger's injuries were not immediately known, said U.S. Captain Douglas Wisniski from the special operations command central. Two ambulances were seen heading towards landing areas.

Afghan leader vows not to seek more arms

KABUL (R) — Afghan President Najibullah said Sunday he would not seek weapons from other sources to fight Western-backed guerrillas after Moscow cut off supplies next month. He told a news conference that foreign interference in the country must cease and he renewed his call for a ceasefire to help to end the 13-year-old Afghan civil war. "Once these two conditions are fulfilled, Afghans can come to a speedy resolution of all their differences," he said. The United States and the Soviet Union are due to halt weapons supplies to the warring sides by Jan. 1 to promote a U.N. peace plan providing for a ceasefire and a transitional government leading to elections. Mr. Najibullah said Kabul would not seek fresh sources of weapons. "The task is to reduce the arms in the country and not seek ways of bringing in new supplies," he said. He denied reports of heavy fighting between rival pro-government militia groups in the western Afghan city of Herat in the past week. Witnesses from the area had said militia groups fired at each other from tanks and armoured vehicles and regular army troops had also clashed with the militia groups. Mr. Najibullah said the reports were "totally wrong" and offered to take foreign reporters to Herat Monday.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

JORDAN TELEVISION
Tel: 773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

18:00	Basil
18:45	Clementine
19:30	Stomach Cliche
19:45	News in French
19:55	French varieties
20:20	News in Hebrew
20:30	News in Arabic
20:35	Who's the Boss
21:10	Our House
22:30	News in English
22:30	French film: "La Petite Fille Maudit"

PRAYER TIMES

04:54	Fajr
06:16	(Sunrise) Dhuhr
11:26	Dhuhr
14:12	Asr
16:36	Maghrib
18:58	Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Smithfield, Tel. 810740
Assumption of God Church, Tel. 632785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624900
Church of the Assumption Tel.

674440
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757
Terrence Church Tel. 622364
Church of the Assumption Tel. 623541
Anglican Church Tel. 623383, Tel. 628341
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 771331
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751
Armenian International Church Tel. 685326
Baptist Church Tel. 626730
Baptist Church Tel. 811205
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Tel. 623624, 654932
Church of the Nazarene Tel. 675691

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

It will be cloudy, cold and rainy at times and winds will be westerly fresh. In Amman, it will be dusty and partly cloudy, and winds will be southerly fresh and more calm.

Min./Max. temp.
Amman 3 / 9

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:
Dr. Youssef Fagih 657909
Dr. Mohammad Sharabi 658878
Dr. Wael Dammak 748800
Dr. Rana Zaidah 894295
First pharmacy 651912
Fawcett pharmacy 783336
Al Asmaa pharmacy 650755
Naboukhi pharmacy 623672
Al Salem pharmacy 626730
Yacoub pharmacy 644945
Shamsi pharmacy 676660

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Immediate 661111
Rescue 63041
Civil Defence Emergency 199
Rousseau Police 192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade 891228
Blood Bank 775121
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 986390
Public Security Department 63021
Hotel Complaints 602800
Price Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage 661176
Complaints 891467
Amman Municipality 787111
Telephone Information 787111

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Hussein Medical Centre 813813/32
Khalid Maternity, J. Amn 644281/6
Khalid Maternity, J. Amn 644281/6
Jabal Amman Maternity 642502
Madina, J. Amn 636140
Palestine, Shamsi 664174
Shamsi Hospital 669131
University Hospital 845945
Al-Hussein Hospital 687227/9
The Islamic Abadi 661717/1
Al-Abdi, Abadi 661646

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (06)5200-5, where it should always be verified.

Italian, Al-Mahjoun 777101/3
Al-Bashir, J. Ashraf 775111/26
Army, Marja 891617/5
Queen Alia Hospital 602405/0
Amal Hospital 674155
Zarga Govt. Hospital (09)983323
Zarga National Hospital (09)980560
Rin Sina Hospital (09)987322
Al-Hussein Modern Hospital (02)47100
AQABA:
Princess Haya Hospital (06)3141/1

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

05:40	Singapore, Kuala Lumpur (RJ)
06:30	Amman (RJ)
06:35	Muscat, Dubai (RJ)
06:40	Beirut, Bahrain (RJ)
17:05	New York, Montreal (RJ)
17:25	Frankfurt, Belgrade (RJ)
19:20	Tripoli (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

15:45	Beirut (ME)
15:45	Bucharest (MS)

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

07:30	Amman (RJ)
10:30	London (RJ)
10:40	Tripoli (RJ)
11:00	Yamou, Frankfurt (RJ)
11:10	Belgrade, Madrid (RJ)
11:30	Amsterdam, New York (RJ)
11:45	Rome, Madrid (RJ)
12:45	Geneva, Paris (RJ)
12:45	



ART EXHIBITION — His Royal Highness Prince Talal Ben Mohammad and Princess Ghaida Talal paid a visit to the Abdul Hamid Shoman Foundation (AHSF) and were briefed on the functions of its various units including the information centre, the

public library, the children's library and the computer library. The Prince and Princess had earlier opened at the AHSF's scientific and cultural centre an exhibition of paintings by Jordanian artist Jumana Al Hussein.

Camp refugees doubt Israeli peace intentions, back intifada

By Serene Halasa
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — As the eyes of the Arab world focus on Tuesday's Israeli talks in Washington, many Palestinians in refugee camps in Jordan were Monday quietly, if not somberly celebrating the fourth anniversary of the "intifada" with scepticism over the possible fate of the Middle East peace process and whether it would produce an equitable solution.

There was a general consensus among those interviewed by the Jordan Times on the eve of the intifada's fourth anniversary that the Israeli "war" over the date of the second round of talks has reemphasised an Israeli hard-line position rejecting any withdrawal from Arab territories thus they felt the situation necessitated the continuation of the intifada as a form of armed struggle and of rejection by the people living under occupation.

Furthermore, many of those interviewed felt that the Israeli stance and the Arab delegation's sterile wait-in-Washington, the continued Israeli hard-line statements vowing never to return Arab land, the continued building of settlements, the week-long imposed curfew in most Palestinian cities, and the meek American response to Israeli intransigence have all added up to the feeling of scepticism and doubt.

"There is a clear contradiction

between the need to step up the armed struggle and the need to find a peaceful solution to our problem," said Adham Adel, a government employee from the Baqaa refugee camp. "But you have to remember that our people under occupation are constantly suffering at the hands of the Israeli forces. This daily suffering climaxed in the intifada that would never be silenced unless there is a radical solution to the Palestinian problem."

"How can you talk about a peace process when the Palestinians are not even allowed to have their own independent delegation and when we, Arabs, have to do things according to Israeli conditions?" asked Abdul Latif Abdullah, a merchant in Baqaa. "The Israelis don't even acknowledge that there is a Palestinian problem, so we have to find new ways to deal with an enemy that doesn't acknowledge our right to exist," he added.

A taxi driver from the same refugee camp, Najeh Al Ayedi, said he believed that the ongoing peace efforts were fruitless because of Israeli stubbornness and rigid stand. "Israel will not give up Arab land easily and that is why I believe the intifada should continue until there is a final and honourable solution to the Palestinian problem," he said.

A 28-year-old school teacher, Mahmoud Ahmad, reiterated the sense of mistrust and doubt looming over the peace talks and said

that the intifada should not stop until "every inch of Arab land is returned."

"I am 100 per cent sure that the talks in Washington are not going to work," he told the Jordan Times. "Israel is not to be trusted because it might fall under international pressure now and show some concessions, but it will repeat its brutal occupation double fold in years to come," he added, explaining that the massive Soviet Jewish immigration was the most frightening aspect of future policymaking.

"My expectations are bleak," Mr. Adham said. "Israel's ambitions designs are much greater than we expect and they include the whole Arab World and not only the land of Palestine."

Another 18-year-old student, Eyad Rajeh, did not show as much pessimism over the outcome of the peace talks, maintained that the intifada was a "people's decision" not a "one man's decision."

"I don't think the intifada would continue if there was peace and Arab lands were returned," he said. "But it's hard to imagine peace by listening to Israel's hardline rhetoric."

Abu Kamal, an owner of a hardware store in Baqaa took the argument a step forward saying: "If there was real peace — something everyone wanted to see in this region — and rights were recognised, then the intifada would have served its purpose."

Consultants begin examining Jordan's educational system

AMMAN (J.T.) — A team of British consultants working for the British Overseas Development Agency arrived in Amman Monday for a 20-day visit during which its members will examine the ongoing programme for overhauling the educational system in Jordan.

The process, which is in implementation of resolutions passed

by the 1987 educational conference in Jordan involves training of teachers, introducing new curricula for schools and textbooks, evaluating school buildings and educational facilities.

The British consultants will be meeting with the director general of the Ministry of Education's Educational Centre, the director of technical education, super-

visors of schools and educationists to discuss a training programme for teachers.

Ministry of Education officials said that the group would be talking to teachers and instructors at a number of teacher training centres and would be examining new teaching methods followed by teachers undergoing training under the ministry's programme of upgrading qualifications of school teachers and teaching proficiency.

The Ministry of Education, in cooperation with the Ministry of Higher Education and Jordanian universities, is undertaking a programme for upgrading the standard of teachers in Jordan through three training centres in Amman, Irbid and Karak.

Teachers are being trained to improve their skills and exposed to new methods for teaching at schools as adopted by the 1987 conference with a view to raising the educational standards in the Kingdom.

Agricultural seminar reviews protection from pests, diseases

AMMAN (J.T.) — A seminar organised by the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) in cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture Monday ended a second day of discussions during which participants reviewed two working papers related to promoting food production and agriculture in the Near East region.

One of the papers reviewed in the first session Monday dealt with means of combating agricultural pests which affect vegetables protected under plastic sheets. The paper also outlined the role FAO could play in helping to implement national programmes in this concern.

The paper recommended

exchanges among Near East countries and called for promoting projects in fighting pests.

The other paper, which was discussed in the second session Monday, dealt with diseases which could be transmitted to humans by animal like rabies and salmonella. The paper recommended imposing stricter controls over inter-state crossings by roving herds of cattle and sheep, improving hygiene services for animals, boosting the use of veterinary vaccination and other services.

The seminar is also discussing topics related to growing produce in hot houses, production of seeds used in the Near East region, crop diseases, combating pests and other related matters.

Delegates from 24 nations in the Near East region are taking part in the five-day conference, which opened in Amman Sunday.

SSC opens symposium tomorrow

AMMAN (Petra) — The Social Security Corporation (SSC) will organise a symposium Wednesday for its liaison officers on the implementation of the social security laws. The symposium aims to acquaint the participants with the law, define their duties and familiarise them with the legal, financial and administrative aspects of the law.

Iranian parliamentary team meets Arabiyat, presents Tehran views on Mideast peace moves

AMMAN (J.T.) — A delegation representing the Iranian Shura Council (national assembly) arrived in Amman Monday on a visit and to hold talks with members of the Lower House of Parliament on issues of mutual concern to Jordan and Iran.

The delegation handed a message to Lower House of Parliament speaker Abdul Latif Arabiyat containing the resolutions of an international conference held in Tehran in October to voice support for the Palestinian people in their struggle against Israel.

The conference, attended by Palestinian groups among other delegations from 60 countries, had rejected the American-brokered Middle East conference and called for armed struggle against Israel.

The message, addressed to Dr. Arabiyat by Mahdi Karoubi, the Shura Council's speaker, was delivered by the delegation members who extended an invitation to Dr. Arabiyat to visit Tehran.

Dr. Arabiyat said the Islamic nation was in dire need for solidarity and close cooperation at this crucial stage to counter threats from enemies of the Islamic nation.

At the meeting, attended by House members, Dr. Arabiyat briefed the visitors on Jordan's endeavours to support the Palestinian people at all levels.

Dr. Arabiyat thanked the delegation for the message and promised that it will be examined

by the Lower House members.

The head of the Iranian delegation called for increased cooperation among Islamic countries in all fields particularly under the present difficult circumstances facing the Islamic nation.

He said the visit aimed at promoting Jordanian-Iranian cultural, economic, commercial and political cooperation and to sound out Jordan's views with regard to the Tehran conference resolutions.

The Tehran conference called on Islamic and Arab countries to reject all conciliatory efforts which, it said, could lead to formal recognition of Israel.

The Iranian delegation's two-day visit covers talks with Jordanian officials and tours of archaeological and religious sites in the Kingdom.

In a late development, members of the Iranian delegation were also received by Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Minister Izzedin Al Khatib who briefed them on Jordan's efforts exerted to prevent attempts by Israel to Judaize the holy places in Jerusalem and the rest of the West Bank.

He said in the meeting, which was attended by Dr. Arabiyat, that Jordanian-Palestinian relations were distinguished.

"Since the start of the intifada, His Majesty King Hussein issued his directives to the ministry to allocate monthly salaries to the families of martyrs killed in the Palestinian uprising against Israeli occupation," he said.

Ministry prepares rural and municipal reforms

IRBID (Petra) — Municipal and Rural Affairs and the Environment Minister Abdul Razzaq Tubeishat affirmed Monday that the ministry is currently working on implementing His Majesty King Hussein's directives calling for supporting local municipal councils and developing their work through updating legisla-

tion and laws. In a meeting with administrative and heads of municipal and rural councils in Irbid governorate, Dr. Tubeishat said the ministry has started preparing draft laws and was studying proposals in this regard. The draft laws and proposals would be discussed at a general conference which would be attended by heads of municipal and rural councils for approval, he said.

"We hope that we can hold this conference within the few coming weeks," he added.

The minister called for cooperation between the councils to be able to reach the aspired goals. "With such cooperation a lot will be achieved for the local councils," he said.

Dr. Tubeishat said the ministry had prepared a complete study on problems facing the municipal and rural councils and had referred it to the Council of Ministers.

The study, he said, included recommendations on ways to remove obstacles facing the councils and solve their problems.

He called for revising the role of the joint councils and for activating them.

He said the ministry intended to develop the efficiency of technical, administrative and financial cadres at the local councils through holding courses and specialised seminars.

The ministry, he continued, was currently studying the issue of reducing interest rates of the Cities and Villages Development Bank and was trying to find new financial resources for the bank to enable it to contribute to supporting the councils' projects.

The minister announced at the meeting that the ministry would distribute JD 1.5 million to the municipalities to help them pay back their debts.

Irbid governor, who was also present at the meeting, briefed the minister on the demands and needs of the local councils.

He affirmed the importance of updating laws and called for increasing allocations for the council.

Seminar on communication techniques ends Thursday

AMMAN (J.T.) — A two-week seminar on new communication services sponsored by the French Embassy in Jordan is drawing to a close this week. A total of 19 participants from the Telecommunications Corporation (TCC), Jordan Television (JTV) and Yemen, Syria and Lebanon are taking part in the seminar organised in cooperation with the TCC training centre in Amman.

The seminar, which ends Thursday, entailed discussions and training session related to new aspects of television broadcasting and the latest developments in new data communication services that are mainly dedicated to the corporate sectors (audiotext, videoconferencing, smart buildings, value added networks and services, PC to PC communication, etc.).

A spokesman for the French Embassy said that the participants exchanged expertise and advanced ideas aimed at promoting telecommunication services for the business sector as well as for the public users within the country and in relation with international networks.



His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, Monday speaks at the end of a three-day conference on farming cooperatives (Petra photo)

Regent places high priority on Arab food security

AMMAN (J.T.) — A three-day conference on farming cooperatives, organised by the Arab Farming Cooperatives Federation (AFCF) came to a close here Monday with a speech by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, urging closer Arab cooperation among Arab states in matters related to ensuring food security for the Arab World.

In 1986, the Arab World's food imports exceeded \$25 billion and the amount is expected to triple by the end of the present century, the Regent said at the closing session.

He emphasised the importance of information and expertise in planning and implementing agricultural projects and urged Arab states to buy their needs of food supplies in bulk if necessary in order to cut down on the cost.

Weatherman sees no need for umbrellas today

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — A series of cold fronts accompanying the low depression that affected Jordan and the rest of the eastern Mediterranean region Monday have brought very scattered showers in the north of Jordan and strong winds and dust to all other parts of the country, according to the Department of Meteorology.

Department official Jamal Al Mousa said the depression, which has moved to the north east of Turkey, could bring some scattered showers and create shallow clouds in the northern regions Tuesday, but no rain was expected in other parts of the country.

Tuesday and Wednesday were expected to be cloudy and cold with temperatures not exceeding 12 during the day dropping to five Celsius at night, Mr. Mousa noted in a statement to the Jordan Times Monday evening.

But he said rain was expected Wednesday night and Thursday largely due to the creation of a new low depression just south of Italy which would reach Cyprus by Wednesday. He said the new depression was expected to be accompanied by a number of cold fronts, bringing rain to the Kingdom and other parts of the eastern Mediterranean region.

Jardaneh to present budget tomorrow

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Lower House of Parliament is to convene Wednesday under the chairmanship of its speaker, Abdul Latif Arabiyat, to examine the Kingdom's 1992 fiscal budget to be delivered by Finance Minister Basel Jardaneh.

A statement from Parliament Monday said that Dr. Arabiyat invited the deputies for the special session which will be attended by Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker and other cabinet members.

The 1992 draft budget was prepared by the outgoing government of Prime Minister Taher Masri and unveiled on Nov. 19. The JD 1.278 billion draft budget has a deficit of JD 107 million — about 50 per cent reduction from 1991's budget deficit.

The budget will be examined by parliament during the current regular session before it can be endorsed by a Royal Decree.

The main features of the budget include: — Domestic revenues, including recovered loans, estimated at

JD 682 million. — External committed grants estimated at JD 281 million. — Total current expenditure estimated at JD 940 million and capital expenditure at JD 338 million.

— JD 45 million allocated for pay increases for civil and security personnel and the armed forces.

The cabinet statement indicated that GDP was expected to be around JD 2.8 billion.

The allocations in the new budget would create 6,300 new jobs in government departments and security forces as well as other public institutions.

In the Lower House's next bi-weekly session to be held Sunday, Dec. 15, the House will take a vote of confidence in the new government formed by Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker.

Another announcement by Dr. Arabiyat Monday said that House committees formed Sunday would hold a meeting Tuesday to elect chairman and rapporteurs.

WANTED PRIVATE ENTERPRISE OFFICER

The U.S. Agency for International Development has a vacancy in its office of trade, investment and production for a private enterprise officer. The position is for a U.S. citizen, and the incumbent will be responsible for all phases of management for a series of private sector development projects, including technical support for strategy development, design of new activities and evaluation of ongoing or completed private sector development initiatives.

In executing these duties, the incumbent will interact regularly with top level government and business leaders.

Applicants should be American citizens residing in Jordan preferably with an advanced degree in a relevant field such as business administration, economics, finance and marketing; should have strong English writing and speaking skills and experience in programme management.

Applicant should submit a C.V. and a sample of his/her writing (in English) no later than December 22, 1991 to:

Personnel Office
U.S. Agency for International Development
P.O.Box 354
Amman, Jordan

WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

EXHIBITIONS

- ★ Exhibition of scientific and technical books at the University of Jordan.
- ★ Exhibition of paintings by a group of Iraqi artists at Alia Art Gallery.
- ★ Art exhibition by Jumana Al Hussein at Abdul Hamid Shoman Foundation Gallery.
- ★ Exhibition of paintings by Jalal Oreikat at the Phoenix Art Gallery.
- ★ Antique Christmas show of Julia Hanania at the Marriott Hotel.
- ★ Art exhibition by Nadeema Mubesa and Halim Mahdi at Baladna Art Gallery, the Gardens Street.

LECTURE

- ★ Lecture entitled "Museums in Germany — the Propagation of Culture" by Nelly Lama at the Goethe Institute — 7 p.m.



The British Council is seeking to recruit

1. A Registrar for the Language Centre, and
2. A typist/Registry clerk.

Candidates for both posts should be Jordanian, fluent in Arabic and English, spoken and written and have typing skills in both languages.

Familiarity with word processing and relevant professional experience are strong advantages.

Details of both posts are available at our Reception desk.

If you are interested in either or both posts, please send a detailed C.V. and photo by 16 December to:

The Director
The British Council
P.O.Box 634
Amman, Jordan

Jordan Times

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Soviet fallout could threaten peace prospects

THE WORLD has been watching with dismay and utter disbelief the Soviet Union squirm on its deathbed ever since Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev ascended to power. Not that the international community is supportive of the Communist order, rather because of a deep conviction that the world order requires a set of checks and balances that would be absent without another superpower sharing clout in the international arena with the U.S. Nonetheless, the sick Soviet Communist structure seems to have come to its end when the leaders of Russia, the Ukraine and Byelorussia signed its death certificate as a union in a ceremony Sunday that put the seal on the official breakup of the former giant. "We," the three leaders stated on the occasion, "the Republics of Byelorussia, the Russian Federation and Ukraine... note that the Union of the Soviet Socialist Republics as a subject of international law and a geopolitical reality ceases its existence."

Even though historians would differ on the real causes behind the demise of the Soviet Union, history will recall that the collapse of that superpower occurred during the reign of Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev. The failed coup against Gorbachev earlier this year was the last desperate attempt to reverse the disintegration of that country. Political scientists may also conclude that the way the Soviet Union was structured and run was simply anathema to national aspiration and human yearnings for freedom and democratic rule. The old Soviet Union was a mosaic of nations that by and large had little in common in terms of culture and orientation. With the three breakaway republics constituting 70 per cent of the original Soviet population and enjoying commonality of interests unshared by other regions of the country, especially in the southern rim of the union, the stage is set for the "Westernisation" of the new order in every sense of the word. It remains to be seen whether armed conflicts would break out between the various parts of the former union. The odds are in favour of such conflicts proliferating across the country, especially in the southern parts where there are already ample signs that territorial, ethnic and religious differences would continue to fuel mini wars if not outright major wars involving nuclear weapons as Gorbachev has projected.

What these dramatic yet ominous developments could mean for the Arab World is something that is still open for conjecture. However, one thing appears to be imminent even at this early stage: The breakup of the Soviet Union will necessarily lead to further expansion in Jewish immigration from various regions of that country to Israel. And everyone knows what substantial demographic changes in the Middle East would this influx mean with regards to the occupied Arab territories. That is why the Arabs must make every effort possible to abort Israeli plans to further colonise the West Bank, Gaza Strip and the Golan Heights before it is too late. As things stand now, the ongoing peace process appears to hold the only hope to accomplish that objective.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

AL RA'I daily Monday commemorated the advent of the fifth year of the Palestinian uprising (al intifada) with praise to the Palestinian people waging a revolt for freedom. Four long years of struggle waged by the old and young, men and women and all people of Palestine against repression and occupation have won the Palestinians the respect of the world, said the paper. Over the past four years, the Israelis tried every means at their disposal and all forms of oppression and terrorism in order to subdue the will of the Palestinian people and to stifle their voice, said the paper. Throughout the past four years, the Palestinians have been involved in a struggle for their freedom and an end to occupation of their land and have been confronting the Israeli troops with stones and offering numerous sacrifices for the sake of liberating their homeland, the paper continued. The Palestinian people's legendary steadfastness and resistance, underline the fact that the oppressed people are determined to wrest their freedom and their rights by all possible means and at all costs, said the paper.

A columnist in Al Dustour criticised the government for deciding to treat all the government employees equally by offering each of them JD 10 as a cost of living allowance without differentiating between those who are worthy of this allowance and those who are not. Mohammed Doudieh said that no government employee has ever been dismissed for incompetence although everyone realises the fact that the public administration is incompetent requiring overhauling and drastic reform. The writer said it is hoped that the long-promised reform will come without any interference or influence from Parliament members who have been playing such game and mediating for the appointment of certain people in government offices. It is hoped that Parliament members would not tamper with government plans to overhaul the civil service system and would not impede the expected process, said the writer. Daoudieh said he had little hope of seeing administrative reform, should the present state of affairs persist and Parliament members pursue their old practice of interfering in government business. The writer said that he feared that administrative reform would meet the same fate of economic reform, educational reform and agricultural reform which have never seen the light yet.

Far-right assails Bush but seen as no threat to nomination

By Michael Posner
Reuters

WASHINGTON — Political experts say Republican Party rules give right-wingers who are mounting a challenge to President George Bush little chance of blocking his nomination for a second term.

Party sources say conservative Republican commentator Patrick Buchanan will announce on Tuesday an "America first" campaign and will run in primaries against the president.

Mr. Buchanan, 53, a White House speech writer under Republican President Richard Nixon and Gerald Ford, is a highly visible conservative on television talk shows and exposé of right-wing causes in a syndicated newspaper column.

Mr. Bush, a self-described conservative, successfully wooed the



George Bush

right in 1988 with anti-abortion and no-new-taxes stands. But many turned against him after a

1990 agreement with the Democratic-controlled Congress permitting higher taxes.

Mr. Buchanan, echoing the six Democratic presidential contenders — who may soon be joined by New York Governor Mario Cuomo — says Mr. Bush spends too much time on foreign affairs and is not minding the store at home, particularly the stagnant economy.

Mr. Buchanan's campaign will start in New Hampshire, where voters go to the polls in February in the first of a series of state contests to name delegates to the Republican nominating convention in Houston next August.

His challenge follows the announcement by David Duke, a former Ku Klux Klan and American Nazi leader, on Wednesday that he will run against Mr. Bush in all Republican primaries except New Hampshire.

Gary Koops, a Republican Party spokesman, said he did not believe either challenge would stand up.

"It's a little hypothetical that either Duke or Buchanan will win delegates," he told Reuters.

Under the nomination process used by Republicans, the winner in most state primaries gets all the delegates. Only a few states have proportional representation where a challenger can get some delegates without winning a majority of votes.

Political experts say an even greater obstacle for a Republican challenger is to get his name formally before the nominating convention so delegates can vote for him.

To do this, a candidate must have the support of a majority of at least five of the 50 state delegations — a near impossibility against an incumbent president

who is still well regarded in the party.

But experts say the prospect of a third-party assault on the candidacy will come in January.

Mr. Bush, who has his hands full warding off Democratic charges that he has worsened economic problems through inaction, also is under fire from conservatives angry over the forced departure of White House Chief of Staff John Sununu this week.

Richard Viguerie, a prominent right wing fund-raiser, said Mr. Bush abandoned conservatives when he replaced Mr. Sununu with Transportation Secretary Samuel Skinner, a shrewd political operator and former federal prosecutor.

"President Bush sent a message to conservatives that he plans to ignore them and their issues," Mr. Viguerie said.

Yugoslav army faces deep divisions over strategy, experts say

By Timothy Heritage
Reuters

BELGRADE — After five months of fighting in Croatia, the Yugoslav army faces deep divisions over strategy which threaten to tear it apart, Yugoslav and Western military experts say.

They say hardliners who want to grab more Croatian land for the Republic of Serbia or a new Yugoslav state are waging a battle with generals who want a ceasefire and back attempts by the United Nations to send peacekeeping troops.

Army chiefs fear if fighting does not stop, the conflict will spread to the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina, risking the loss of vital military facilities there and plunging Yugoslavia into all-out civil war.

"There are divisions in the army. There are rogue elements, serious trouble elements," a Western diplomat said.

"Some of the Croatian and the Serbian and the JNA (army) forces are not under the control of the centre," European Community envoy Lord Carrington said on a recent visit.

A fierce assault on the Croa-

tian port of Dubrovnik on Friday fed speculation that rifts are widening.

The army has ordered soldiers not to fire first and says it supports peace moves. It denied responsibility for the attack.

EC monitors in Croatia said the military had expressed regret and would launch an investigation, prompting suggestions that local commanders had carried out the attack without any order from army leaders in Belgrade.

Some army chiefs say the military has achieved its aims in Croatia, where it is backing Serbs who rose up against the republic's declaration of independence from Yugoslavia in June.

"The war goals have been accomplished. The majority of Serbs in the administrative part of Croatia are protected and now it is up to the political leaders to find a peaceful solution," Serbian Defence Minister Tomislav Simovic said.

He and other army leaders say they have no intention of trying to seize territory in Croatia and that the army has acted only to protect Serbs in the republic.

Diplomats say the army has control of about one third of Croatia, including most areas

where Serbs are in the majority. But some local commanders appear to want to fight on. They are driven by memories of a massacre of Serbs, Jews and Gypsies in the Fascist state set up in Croatia in World War II.

"We will not let the Serbian people be led to the slaughterhouses again," said Zeljko Raznjajic-Arkan, who commands Serbian volunteers in one part of eastern Croatia.

"If they (the Croats) do not realise that, we will have to go to Zagreb and completely defeat them militarily."

Some analysts say rifts are also growing between the army leadership and Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic.

They say that although the army has long been dominated by Serbs, Mr. Milosevic wants to make it a purely Serbian force and draw Serbs in Bosnia into the conflict. The army opposes this.

"The main strategic problem is Bosnia because uncertain events there could harm the army more than anything else," said Milos Vasic, military commentator for the magazine Vreme.

"Bosnia is the key to the whole Yugoslav territory and Milosevic has fallen out of step with the



army."

Yugoslav Defence Minister General Veljko Kadijevic says the army has undergone a transformation since fighting started.

Few recruits remain from Slovenia, Croatia, Macedonia and Bosnia. Diplomats say the

already large numbers of men avoiding the draft would increase and the army could break up if fighting spread to Bosnia.

The army which long defended communism in Yugoslavia has had to find itself a new identity and change its tactics.

"We had to make as complete transformation of the army and its doctrine... under a strong wind of nationalism and other internal divisions, it was inevitable that internal divisions would be felt within the JNA too," Mr. Kadijevic said in an interview in the magazine Narodna Armija this month.

Mr. Vasic and other commentators say the army has no strategy and has made many wrong moves such as besieging the eastern Croatian town of Vukovar for three months although it had little or no strategic value.

European Community monitors in Croatia went further, accusing the army of destroying villages and indiscriminately killing civilians. The army rejected the charges.

Despite outnumbering and out-gunning Croatian forces, the army shows no sign of being able to bring fighting to an end, even if it wants to.

"The Croats have the advantage of being forced together and defending their homes. That's a big difference from the army, where many people have avoided the draft," Mr. Vasic said.

Cohesion, co-decision, competence — a guide to summit jargon

MAASTRICHT (R) Much of the debate at the European Community summit on Monday and Tuesday will be conducted in the EC's obscure jargon.

Here is a glossary of words and abbreviations which have taken on special meanings during the negotiations:

Chapeau — The preamble to the treaty, officially called the common provisions. Sitting on top of the whole treaty, it is therefore the "chapeau." French for "hat." This section of the treaty establishes a new European union, which covers the community and areas in which its 12 members plan to cooperate.

CFSP — Common Foreign and

Security Policy. One section of the treaty sets up new rules for the 12 EC states to cooperate in foreign and security policy and undertake joint actions.

Co-decision — The term used for giving the European Parliament more say in passing EC legislation. The proposed new powers stop short of giving the parliament rights equal to those of the EC governments. For that reason, Britain confusingly prefers to talk about the new "negative asset procedure" (veto for short). Others speak simply of 199B, the treaty article establishing the new powers.

Cohesion — Shorthand for transfers of resources from richer

parts of the community to poorer regions. Spain is threatening to block the treaty unless guarantees of a fairer share of EC resources are written into the text.

Competence — The term for policy areas in which the treaty gives the community the right to act. The proposed treaty introduces some new competences, for example public health and culture, and extends the EC's role in others, such as social policy.

Convergence — The process of bringing the performance of the 12 EC economies closer together. Moving to a single EC currency depends on at least seven countries passing the convergence test.

ECB — The European Central Bank, which will take over control of monetary policy when a single currency is established in the final stage of monetary union. The 12 national central bank governors, who will have to be independent from their governments, will each have a seat on the EC governing board.

EMI — The European Monetary Institute. This body will be set up on Jan. 1, 1994, at the start of the second, transitional stage of monetary union. Its duties will include monitoring the European monetary system and preparing the final stage of monetary union. It will then be replaced by the ECB.

Pillar — A section of the treaty. There are three pillars: the rules governing the European Community itself, Cooperation among the 12 EC states on Foreign Policy (CFSP) and cooperation on police and judicial affairs.

QMV — Qualified Majority Voting, the voting system used by the 12 EC governments as an alternative to unanimity. Each country has a number of votes determined by its size. Germany, Britain, France and Italy have 10 each, Spain eight, Belgium, Greece, Netherlands and Portugal five each, Denmark and Ireland three each and Luxembourg two. A qualified majority is 54 votes out of a total of 76.

Subsidiarity — The principle, enthusiastically backed by Britain and Germany, that the EC should act only when it would be more effective than the 12 national governments acting individually. This principle is written into the treaty explicitly for the first time.

Temple — A description of the shape of the proposed treaty, because it is made up of pillars.

Tree — The shape which some countries who favour more rapid integration wanted the treaty to have. A tree would have only one trunk, the European Community itself, without inter-governmental cooperation on foreign and security policy and judicial and police matters.

Pearl Harbour attack marked end of U.S. isolation

By Deborah Zabarenko
Reuters

WASHINGTON — The bombs that dropped on Pearl Harbour 50 years ago destroyed U.S. isolation along with U.S. battleships, and pushed the United States into its role as policeman of the world.

In less than two hours on the morning of Dec. 7, 1941, the United States changed from a nation that saw little stake in a faraway war to one geared to avenge the only attack on its territory by a modern foreign power.

The damage Japanese bombers did at Pearl Harbour's battleship row — 2,403 U.S. personnel killed, 1,178 wounded, 320 aircraft destroyed or damaged, three battleships sunk, one captured and five others damaged — was unequalled in U.S. history.

But the Japanese naval commander at the time accurately foretold the U.S. response the bombing would unleash.

"I fear we have only awakened a sleeping giant," said Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto, "and filled him with a terrible resolve."

Pearl Harbour is one of the moments that become touchstones for American policy, according to Carol Gluck, a Columbia University expert on U.S.-Japanese relations.

"There is no doubt that Pearl Harbour did propel the United States out of its isolation and it has not returned to it since and never will be able to," Mr. Gluck said in an interview.

Pearl Harbour changed the U.S. vision of itself almost overnight, and the very words "Pearl Harbour" became slang for the cunning sneak attack.

It "burned into the psyche of Americans a vow never again to be caught off guard," wrote Richard Halloran, a director of the Honolulu-based East-West Centre Research Institute.

President Franklin Roosevelt called it a "date that will live in infamy" in a six-minute address to Congress on the day after the attack, inspiring legislators to pass a declaration of war exactly 33 minutes later.

His speech took care to mention that the Japanese had also attacked China, Hong Kong, Malaya and the Philippines, a move to link U.S. fortunes to the international community.

It was a hard case to sell to the American people, many of whom were still recovering from the great depression and saw little use in becoming embroiled in an international conflict.

To do it, President Roosevelt used a proven publicity technique that he had developed, a pre-

sidential fireside chat on Dec. 9, 1941.

"There is no such thing as security for any nation — or any individual — in a world ruled by the principles of gangsterism," he told the nation in a radio broadcast.

"We have learned that our ocean-girt hemisphere is not immune from severe attack — that we cannot measure our safety in terms of miles on any map any more."

President Roosevelt went on to describe a collaboration between Japan and Nazi Germany to turn the world into "one gigantic battlefield" and warned that all Americans would have to be ready for the fight.

Washington had been concerned about Japanese expansion into Asia throughout the 1930s, and imposed economic sanctions against Japan in August 1940.

President Roosevelt readily acknowledged that delaying U.S. entry into the war had allowed U.S. stockpiles grow, giving a strong base for wartime production.

"The all-out mobilisation for war that followed the attack lifted American capitalism out of the lingering depression, and simultaneously established the basic contours of the post-war state," wrote John Dower, a professor of

Japanese history at Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

President Roosevelt stressed the villainous nature of the Axis powers and the U.S. responsibility to combat them in the same kind of language that has been used by other presidents to rally support for U.S. conflicts in Korea, Vietnam and the Gulf.

"Powerful and resourceful gangsters have banded together to make war upon the whole human race," President Roosevelt said. "Their challenge has now been flung at the United States of America. The Japanese have treacherously violated the long-standing peace between us."

"We are now fighting to maintain our right to live among our world neighbours in freedom and common decency, without fear of assault."

The fact that Japan attacked U.S. territory first was seen as a key factor in getting the United States into the war, argues historian Ronald Spector.

"In American popular memory... the United States is usually seen as being forced into war by the unexpected and dastardly deed of some malevolent foreign power," said Mr. Spector, professor of history at George Washington University.

LETTER

Trust the customer!

To the Editor:

From a marketer's point of view we still seem to be quite far from implementing the motto: "The consumer is always right even if he or she is wrong."

"Sold products can not be returned or exchanged" is a statement I have seen in many shops and typed on many receipts; this policy has several negative aspects which salespeople do not seem to know or purposefully neglect. This simple but critical statement indicates the short-sightedness of some sellers who still seem to implement the selling concept which aims at achieving profits through the volume of sales — an old philosophy which has been replaced by the modern marketing concept which aims at achieving profits through gaining the satisfaction of consumers.

The implementation of the above mentioned, widely-spread statement indicates the extent to which sellers take advantage of their customers and neglect their rights. Trusting the customer is vital for one simple reason: to gain their long-term commitment and loyalty, especially in a competitive market such as the one in Jordan.

I think that it is about time that we build a certain degree of awareness and confidence between our consumers and sellers and maybe then the statement will be dropped off our receipts, which will be to the benefit of both consumers and sellers.

Rhonda Marwan Kamel,
P.O. Box 13118,
Amman, Jordan.

The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any subject they wish to tackle. Letters intended for publication, however, should contain the writer's full name and preferably address as well. Names can be withheld only upon request and under special circumstances. Letters are subject to editing. The newspaper is not responsible for the return of unused manuscripts.

Le livre de notes — a message of love and peace

By Nelly Lama

She was brought up in the Franco-Arab culture of (pre-nationalised) Egypt, daughter of an industrialist whose creativity and his great success. This did not diminish his spiritual and artistic gifts (he painted and sculpted) nor his nationalistic love for Egypt. Mona was privileged to have a sophisticated upbringing that had no room for prejudices. Her father was her ideal. As a child, she stood reciting in front of the mirror the national speeches that he prepared for his election to parliament.

In spite of her living among the advantaged and the diplomatic circle, Mona focused on and worked among the poor of Charabeya. She felt at home among all sorts of people and that was at the root of her belief in universality, in the inner man.

After the death of her father, she moved on into the world of writing and reciting as if to prolong the existence of that wonderful man.

Her book "Nicholas, fils du Nil" is an ode to her father, and to Egypt "When I left Egypt, I carried within me the pain of parting with it."

"Les chants du karawan," her next book, deal with all the suffering in the world. "The boat-people of Cambodia — from a thousand of them, only 10 arrived..." she explains "so I wrote the poem 'the red boats'."

The karawan is the oriental singing bird. To Mona, "the orient of the heart" is that innermost part of one's being that bears all that is noble within the human being. It is through that orientation that beings of different cultures meet and interact.

She speaks also of the Nubians, who had to depart from their lands as they were engulfed by the rising waters. "They waited to the last moment before quitting. When the boat people refused to take along the dog of an old man, he chose to remain there and face the deluge."

Mona relates: "I made a boat trip over the sunken Nubia, saw its houses beneath the waters of the Nile. It disvelled my innermost feelings and I expressed it in a collection of fragments of poetry 'Quarante voiles pour un exil'."

"Le double compte de l'exil" is another book that deals with two cultures. A refugee arriving in Montreal is hidden by an American. They both have found

difficulty in being accepted, in integrating. It is on that ground that they meet. When he is found an exiled, she packs her bags and lives in an Indian reservation. She is a reenactment of Mona herself who lived the rejection and racism in question.

Her book "Les voix du jour et de la nuit" is a trip into the heart of Egypt, memories of faces and events, or "Sit el kul" the symbol of Egypt.

And finally, "La triste beauté du monde" is an amassing of 10 years of poetry written as a reaction to current events. "The songs of fear and survival" followed the Gulf war and the bloody events of Peking. "The songs of love and melancholy" follow. "The songs of genesis and the future" are based on a reaction to sculptor and contemporary musicians.

In her writing, be it novels or poetry, one can feel a continuous sense of nostalgia, a sense of the lost homeland. "No country remains the same as time passes. So everyone loses the country of his childhood. One feels sad that his children cannot experience the charm of past moments," Mona explains.

In the stage performance, Mona recites her verses in French, while Natalie Choquette, a soprano coloratura, Elise Boucher, alto, and Sylvia Balassanian, pianist, perform relevant music and songs, wearing costumes designed by Anne Rossignol.

Natalie Choquette was born in Tokyo of Canadian parents. She made her musical studies in Moscow and then at the university of Montreal. Her voice has a texture that can touch deep into the heart.

Elise Boucher de Gonzague was born in Quebec of American and French parents, their lineage goes back to Spain and Ireland; a family of musicians that enabled her to study quite early in her life, singing, piano playing and dance. She is a distinguished author-composer-performer. She had made many presentations for radio and television. She held workshops on the performing arts in France. She took part in a jazz vocal quartet among other vocal ensembles that she joined. She arranged the vocalisations for a trio of two voices and a harp. She sang as soloist in works for "symphony, choir and soloists" which she interpreted in Switzerland, France and Canada. It was diffused internationally in all Francophone countries.

The warm texture of her voice and the accuracy of her tone allow her to manipulate and create a variety of musical atmospheres.

Both singers sing in 12 different languages, among which is Arabic.

Sylvia Balassanian, a Lebanese Armenian, left for Paris early in her life and studied music at the École Normale de Musique de Paris. She was awarded the first prize of piano performance. She gave many recitals in houses of culture in Paris before emigrating to Canada. Her opening performance in North America was at the United Nations in New York in 1987. Since then she has been teaching at the University of Quebec in Montreal. Her performing style on the piano bears the tones and accents of her Armenian origin. Her originality comes from the colours that she paints the miscellaneous works with.

Anne Rossignol was born in France but lived in Amerindian territories. She is a painter, decorator and costume designer. She taught courses at the University of Quebec, Montreal, and has dressed many acting celebrities in Quebec. Her style is marked by the purity of her lines and the mysticism in her artistic conception. She conceives her costumes and scene designs in direct relationship with the fluidity of movement on the scene. This is why one feels a sense of refinement and elegance around the stage.

Together, the ladies form a wonderful team. The multiplicity of their backgrounds makes them open-minded and understanding. They seek beauty in complexity and yet they seek that which is common to all men.

In the performance, Mona Latif Ghattas' warm voice, her fluid text and the music interpretation, manage to smoothen out of discrepancies among the nations, discrepancies created by events, like the Gulf war, where poets were torn and could not form an opinion.

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Season's greetings - Management

Observations of a traveller in the U.S.

By Pascal B. Karmy

IN my previous article (Jordan Times, Oct. 14, 1991) general observations were made about some of the Arabs and Palestinian immigrants in the U.S. In addition, I have recorded in my diary some matters which normally draw the attention of a person who travels for the first time to the U.S., and particularly to California, which has the largest state population and is third largest in area in the U.S.

After visiting New York (State of Liberty, Empire State Building) we enjoyed staying in Staten Island which is a borough of New York, lying south-east of it. In Staten Island, with its streets lined on both sides with green trees and its relatively quiet sea shore, a person smells a purer air and enjoys a relaxing and quieter life than the hubbub and pollution of New York streets.

In California, the first thing which draws one's attention is the fact that all houses are made of wood, both inside and outside. They are unlike the houses built in the suburbs of the European cities or in the countryside like, for instance, in Britain, France or Belgium. Moreover, the first (ground) floor of the houses is not protected at all by iron bars fixed on the windows or by shutters or the like; there are only wide and high sliding window panes. It is thus fairly easy indeed for a thief to break the window panes, get in and steal, as very often happens.

The reason, however, for constructing wooden and not stone houses and installing only framed window panes is because of the occurrence of earthquakes. In the event of an earthquake the harm done by the falling wood is likely to be less than that done by stones and easier to remove later. It is also easier to break or more the sliding window panes and run out of the house than being faced with iron bars or with shutters. After long periods of time the houses need to be fumigated against woodworm. Fumigation is carried out by specialists.

Almost all the main cities and towns of California are of Spanish

origin (Sacramento, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Pasadena, San Diego, Santa Barbara). It may be remembered that California was a Spanish colony. In 1822 the inhabitants changed their allegiance from Spain to the New Mexican Congress. In 1846 the settlers revolted against Mexico and declared the independent Republic of California but a few months later and as a result of the Mexican-United States war, California was occupied by the U.S. forces and later admitted to the Union.

In watching some of the American television channels I was struck by what I venture to describe as "religious charlatanism." A so-called preacher appears on the screen as a member of a certain church and walks in the studio with vigorous strides to the right and left while preaching about Christian religion or faith for about half an hour or so. Then he pretends to perform miracles. Indeed, immediately, two or three persons appear on the screen allegedly suffering from some kind of disease, then they fall on their backs while other persons behind them raise them up, and lo: the preacher announces with glee

that they are healed of their disease. What appears to be more ludicrous is the fact that the preacher tells the television viewers to put their hands on the television screen so that they will be healed of the diseases from which they suffer. Eventually the channel announces the telephone number of the preacher's church for the purpose of obtaining pamphlets or for contributing to it.

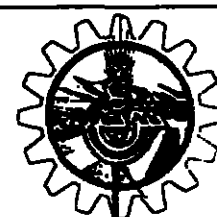
Honestly, preachers on the television often appear to be more like actors rather than Christian sedate preachers. Judaism or rather Zionism has deeply permeated through some U.S. Christian sects to the extent that very often their preachers sound to be delivering sermons on Judaism rather than on the true and pure Christian faith.

Another matter which attracts one's attention in southern California is the lack of non-accessibility of public transportation. If a person wants to go, for example, from Garden Grove to San Clemente or to Dana Point he can find no means of transportation to take him there. One has to have his own private car or to ask a friend or a relative to take him to his destination. That means old

people who have no private car or cannot drive one will have to stay at home all days. Taxis are of course available but they are expensive. By contrast, in Europe, in a given area, means of transportation are more easily available or accessible. However, transportation between states is available either by train or by bus or by aeroplane.

Another observation is this. Salespeople in the shopping centres are very courteous, pleasant and patient with customers. Even more interesting is the fact that you can buy for example a suit or a tuxedo from a shopping centre and return it the following day or after some weeks, although you may have used it in the meantime, provided of course you produce the relevant receipt. Many people take advantage of this practice and even abuse it sometimes. Consequently, some shopping centres announce in advance to the shoppers that no return of goods will be accepted.

Pascal B. Karmy was a lawyer in Palestine up to the end of the Mandate in 1948 and legal adviser in UNRWA headquarters in Beirut and Vienna.



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For this contract, only firms and joint ventures (consortia) who have been pre-qualified will be invited to tender. It is presently anticipated that Tender Documents will be issued to pre-qualified applicants in February 1992, and tenders will be submitted in April 1992. The work required under this contract is as follows:

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Arabs confident of tackling substance

(Continued from page 1)

three separate entrances to the negotiating rooms but separated inside into four rooms.

"We went through the procedure as we envisioned it. A member of the Jordanian delegation sat with the Palestinians in their room, and a delegate from the Palestinians sat with us," a Jordanian delegate told the Jordan Times.

Initial agreements between the Palestinians and Jordanians on the separation of delegations included an arrangement by which one Jordanian would sit in with Palestinian negotiators and vice-versa so that coordination would be maintained at all times.

Yet Jordanians and Palestinian delegates have also indicated that that percentage is not exclusively binding and that it could change according to the subject of negotiations and its applicability to the interests of one side or another.

Although everything seemed in order on Dec. 4, the Israelis had not yet arrived in town and the rooms had not been inspected by their advance team and the arrangements, although agreed upon with the Americans, were not yet finalised with the Israelis.

On Sunday, the Israeli advance team, on an inspection tour of the rooms, noticed the extra room for the Palestinians and immediately objected to the separation between Palestinians and Jordanians and demanded that they meet with Israeli negotiators as a joint delegation in one room.

Members of the Jordanian delegation see this latest move by the Israelis as a new "delaying tactic" and yet another effort to "strip the talks of substance," but they are confident that the Israeli-created obstacles can be overcome.

Contacts to solve the problem of "separation" before the talks resume tomorrow have not succeeded, and the two sides are expected to tackle it early on tomorrow. "Eventually," an observer close to both Arabs and Israelis agreed, "it will be up to the Americans to decide, and the parties will have to go along."

In her briefing to the press yesterday, State Department spokeswoman Margaret Tutwiler said there would only be one room available for the joint delegation.

"As far as the terms of reference, that is a joint delegation and they would be coming here in a joint delegation, and whatever the parties meeting without between themselves is entirely their business," Ms. Tutwiler told reporters.

"It is one room," she insisted. "We have not been asked to mediate on that issue," the spokeswoman said in the briefing, which was dominated by events in the Soviet Union. "We are aware of the parties' views on that issue. Everyone agreed on the terms of reference and the reference

is a joint delegation. Once the parties are in the negotiating sites they can decide to discuss the weather, they can decide to discuss substance, it is all up to them."

Elyakim Rubinstein, who heads Israel's team to the talks, said the joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation could break up into subcommittees to deal with different issues and some relating to Palestinians and some to Jordanians. Israel also insists that even on the sub-committees that there be both Jordanian and Palestinian representation, albeit not equal.

An official reaction to Ms. Tutwiler's statement was not immediately available by either the Jordanian or Palestinian teams. However, a member of the Jordanian delegation indicated privately that a way to break the deadlock could be to hold separate meetings in the same room at different times with the Jordanians and the Palestinians.

The following is the list of the Israeli delegations to the talks in Washington.

Delegation to the talks with Syria: — Yosef Ben-Aharon, David Afek, Ezzat Mor, Yigal Carmon, David Kornblut, Yosef Ohmert, Avraham Lif and Benjamin Rubin.

Delegation to the talks with Lebanon: — Joseph Hadass, Uri Lubrani, David Sultan, Yehoyada Haim, Reuven Erlich, Alan Baker, Hovav Shapira, Yitzhak Levinson, Yosef Haim and Moshe Yair.

Delegation to the joint Jordanian / Palestinian delegation: — Elyakim Rubinstein, Eitan Bentsur, Zalman Shoval, Robby Sabal, Salim Meridor, Dan Rothschild, Elihu Avidan, Yossi Gal, Amos Gilad, Nadav Anner, Avish Zohar, Aviva Ben-Yehia, Nachman Tal and Dov Shefi.

George Hawatmeh, Nermeen Murad and Ghadeer Taher contributed to this story.

Shamir

(Continued from page 1)

opposition to an overall split of the Jordanian-Palestinian negotiations, saying it could seriously "harm" the peace process.

"It could endanger the talks. I don't think it will happen. There can be no disagreements here. There is a formal agreement between Israel and the United States," he said.

He said proposed self-rule for Palestinians under Israeli occupation would not mean Arab control over Jewish settlements.

"The Jewish settlements will not be subject to any non-Israeli authority, nor will they be dependent on such an authority for anything," he said.

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Financial Markets

U.S. Dollar in International Markets

Currency	New York Close	Tel Aviv Close
Sterling Pound	1.8165	1.8075
Deutsche Mark	1.5665	1.5740
Swiss Franc	1.3845	1.3893
French Franc	5.3575	5.3795
Japanese Yen	127.90	126.18
European Currency Unit	1.2955	1.2890

Interbank Interest Rates

Currency	1 MTH	3 MTHS	6 MTHS	12 MTHS
U.S. Dollar	4.67	4.50	4.43	4.56
Sterling Pound	10.56	10.56	10.56	10.50
Deutsche Mark	9.50	9.50	9.50	9.37
Swiss Franc	8.00	7.93	7.87	7.75
French Franc	9.93	9.87	9.81	9.68
Japanese Yen	6.31	6.03	5.81	5.59
European Currency Unit	10.56	10.43	10.37	10.31

Interbank Bid rates for currencies exceeding U.S. Dollars 1,000,000 or equivalent.

Currency	USD/Oz	JD/Gm	Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm
Gold	368.85	6.90	Silver	4.06	0.088

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin

Currency	Bid	Offer
U.S. Dollar	0.6780	0.6800
Sterling Pound	1.2251	1.2312
Deutsche Mark	0.4307	0.4329
Swiss Franc	0.4885	0.4909
French Franc	0.1259	0.1265
Japanese Yen	0.5291	0.5317
Dutch Guilder	0.3818	0.3837
Swedish Krona	0.1175	0.1181
Italian Lira	0.0568	0.0571
Belgian Franc	0.0209	0.0209

Other Currencies

Currency	Bid	Offer
Bahraini Dinar	1.7690	1.777
Lebanese Lira	0.0769	0.0775
Saudi Riyal	0.1805	0.1815
Kuwaiti Dinar	—	—
Qatari Riyal	0.1837	0.1846
Egyptian Pound	0.2000	0.2170
Omani Riyal	1.7350	1.7440
UAE Dirham	0.1837	0.1846
Greek Drachma	0.3740	0.3800
Cypriot Pound	1.4980	1.5150

CAB Indices for Amman Financial Markets

Index	8/12/1991 Close	7/12/1991 Close
All-Share	127.50	126.82
Banking Sector	105.74	105.42
Insurance Sector	127.29	126.75
Industry Sector	159.57	156.47
Services Sector	144.86	143.15

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at mid-session on the London foreign exchange and bullion markets Monday.

One Sterling	1.8065/75	U.S. dollars
One U.S. dollar	1.1360/65	Canadian dollar
	1.5740/50	Deutsche marks
	1.7735/45	Dutch guilders
	1.3890/95	Swiss francs
	32.40/44	Belgian francs
	5.3800/50	French francs
	1191/1192	Italian lire
	128.10/20	Japanese yen
	5.7660/7710	Swedish crowns
	6.2020/70	Norwegian crowns
	6.1215/65	Danish crowns
One ounce of gold	370.00/50	U.S. dollars

Iraq said repairing oil export terminal in northern Gulf

NICOSIA (R) — Iraq, still unable to export oil because of a world trade ban imposed over its invasion of Kuwait last year, is repairing a war-damaged terminal in the northern Gulf, an oil industry newsletter reports.

Iraq's Oil Minister Usama Al Hiti said in Cairo Sunday his country could have the capacity to load over half a million barrels per day (b/d) of oil from its Mina Al Bakr terminal.

The Middle East Economic Survey (MEES) reported Iraq plans to get two of the terminal's four berths into working order and establish 300,000 b/d of export capacity within the next two months, rising to 700,000 b/d in four months.

"MEES learns from reliable sources that the Iraqis are using the oil tanker Kirkuk as a base for a repair team working on the Mina Al Bakr terminal, the tanker being moored close to the terminal itself," the oil industry newsletter said.

Iraq had refused to accept the terms of a U.N. plan for limited crude oil exports to pay for the imports of essential commodities, claiming it was restrictive.

The deep-water Mina Al Bakr terminal, which had a 1.6 million b/d capacity when it was constructed in late 1970s, sustained damage during the 1980-88 Iran-Iraq war and had been repaired to handle 800,000 b/d before Iraq's 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

The terminal was again damaged by the allied forces during the Gulf war. MEES said two of the other four berths were "too badly damaged to merit any restoration effort at this stage."

The oil industry newsletter said Iraq's plans to export crude from Mina Al Bakr was still theoretical at this stage as the U.N. had to approve the terminal as an export outlet and some parts needed to make it operable have to be imported and fall under the trade embargo.

Last Friday press reports that Iraq was willing to negotiate with a U.N. team a new set of rules for crude exports pushed crude oil prices 35 cents to \$20.04 a barrel for January at New York Mercantile Exchange.

The Nicosia-based oil industry newsletter said Iraq was testing production levels of 1.15 million b/d — 800,000 b/d from the northern fields and 350,000 b/d from the south — re-injecting the excess not required for the domestic refineries.

Mr. Hiti said his country could export more than one million b/d of crude oil once the U.N. embargo is lifted.

MEES added that in the near future Iraq could have around 1.6 million b/d production capacity and the country will be capable of exporting — if political clearance is given — 800,000-900,000 b/d through Turkey and another 300,000 b/d from the Mina Al Bakr terminal.

Court orders freeze on Kevin Maxwell assets

LONDON (R) — A court ordered a worldwide freeze on the personal assets of the late Robert Maxwell's son Kevin Monday at the request of accountants seeking money missing from pension funds in the dead tycoon's media empire.

Kevin Maxwell and his brother Ian were also ordered to surrender their passports while they provide any information they can to help trace pension fund assets.

Maxwell died mysteriously at sea on Nov. 5.

His death was the prelude to a spectacular collapse this month of the Maxwell business empire under debts worth up to \$5 billion.

Accountants have subsequently estimated that assets worth more than \$700 million are missing from pension funds of Maxwell's Mirror Group Newspapers and his Maxwell Communication Corporation.

Investigators speculate that he siphoned off the pension money to prop up his crumbling empire

as creditors closed in. Kevin and Ian were directors of Bishopsgate Investment Management, a private firm controlled by Mr. Maxwell which managed several of the pension funds.

The High Court Sunday gave London accountant Neil Cooper worldwide powers to trace pension assets as provisional liquidator of Bishopsgate.

"We have obtained orders on behalf of the provisional liquidators, some against Kevin and some against Ian," said a spokesman for the provisional liquidator.

"Those against Kevin are more stringent because it appears he is the one most closely involved in running Bishopsgate," he added.

The court ordered the Maxwells sons to provide information to help trace pension fund assets within seven days.

The fraud squad is also investigating the collapse of Maxwell's empire and police are inquiring into allegations by the Mirror that he wiretapped some of his top executives.

WORLD STOCK MARKETS

TOKYO — Stocks closed lower in the thinnest estimated volume this year. Arbitrage selling eroded prices. Concern over events in the Soviet Union helped push investors to the sidelines. The Nikkei average finished down 92.18 points to 22,352.88.

FRANKFURT — German shares ended a lethargic session little changed. The 30-share DAX index edged 0.87 point higher to 1,559.05.

PARIS — A cloud of winter depression brought another lower close to a morose Paris Bourse. Few buyers were in evidence and operators focussed on negative factors which were already largely known. The CAC-40 index shed 22.35 points to 1,663.37.

LONDON — Shares closed higher as a late FTSE futures rally helped the market shrug off economic and political worries. The 100-share Financial Times-Stock Exchange index finished up 20.9 points at 2,409.6.

NEW YORK — U.S. blue-chip stocks were firm at midday, trading in a tight range on moderate volume. The Dow Jones industrial average was up 1.79 points at 2,888.19.

Gulf Arab economist criticises economic achievements of GCC

KUWAIT (R) — A Gulf economist criticised the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Sunday, saying it had achieved minimum possible cooperation between member states.

He called on the alliance to draw up a model of planned economic integration which would achieve a common market and diversify sources of income. He also said it should consider bringing Yemen into its fold.

Dr. Abbas Al Mijren, a Kuwaiti economic academic, said the GCC's efforts to diversify economies from dependence on one source of income, oil, had had "very poor results after all these decades."

He accused the organisation, which will hold a summit on Dec. 23 in Kuwait, of concentrating a political matter, giving secondary importance to economic issues.

"The political and security aim

of the GCC has ranked number one since it was formed and until this moment," Dr. Mijren told the second day of a three-day seminar on future economic cooperation and security in the GCC.

He said the GCC appeared satisfied with concentrating on liberalising inter-state trade and coordinating economic activities, giving priority to local development.

"In my opinion, that represents the minimum level of regional economic cooperation and it is a level which does not match the size of dangers and challenges ahead of us," he said.

Dr. Mijren referred to a 1992 European single market, Far East plans for economic integration in addition to U.S. economic and political clout.

"Searching for alternative

sources of income is no longer a luxury which can wait for four more decades because the economic lifespan of oil as a source of energy may be much less than that period," he said.

When the GCC, which groups Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, was formed 10 years ago, Yemen's political conditions did not justify including it in the grouping, Dr. Mijren said.

"We now hold the chance to solve our chronic problems which include food self-sufficiency, economic and military security and that is by extending cooperation bridges with Yemen," he said.

"If Saudi Arabia is the natural geographic extension of the other Gulf states, then Yemen is the human depth to those states," Dr. Mijren added.

"Moving it (Yemen) to the GCC would be a daring step to transfer the organisation from a Gulf cooperation to an Arabian Peninsula council. It will add power to the GCC rather than take power away from it," he pointed out.

Abdullah Al Maajil, a Saudi Arabian industrialist, said GCC states needed to integrate their economies but had to overcome fears that unified economic policies would affect competition in domestic markets.

Varying tariffs on imports between GCC countries made it difficult to draw up a uniform tariff policy. Some GCC projects aimed at foreign markets instead of the regional one, loosening the aim of a common market.

He also said GCC foreign labour preferences put restraints on manpower mobility.

Scholar attributes deforestation, Third World suffering to repayment of debt

OSLO (R) — Rich nations are waging warfare against poor nations by demanding high levels of debt payments, a U.S. doctor told a seminar of former Nobel peace prize winners Sunday.

"Poor majorities in the debtor countries are forced to sacrifice their standards of living and sometimes their lives to pay back loans form which they never benefited," said Dr. Susan George of the Transnational Institute, an international think-tank based in Amsterdam.

"Debt must be understood as... disguised but literal warfare waged against the South. Deforestation, a major contributor to global warming, is directly linked to the debt crisis," she told a three-day seminar of 18 former peace prize winners in Oslo.

Poor countries were "cashing in" their natural resources, including forests, in a desperate attempt to earn hard currency and repay their staggering debt.

Dr. George said figures from the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) showed that half a million children die each year as a direct result of the debt crisis.

Norwegian Prime Minister Gro

Harlem Brundtland, prevented from attending by a cold, also called for extended cooperation between the North and the South to help protect the environment and improve living standards.

"There is no way that we can win the battle to save our global environment unless we mount a full-scale, committed offensive against world poverty and underdevelopment," she said in an address which was read by a government official.

"We need a new partnership between North and South," said Ms. Brundtland, who chaired a

widely-acclaimed 1983 U.N. World Commission on Environment and Development.

Talking about how to limit the so-called greenhouse gases, which many scientists believe are increasing world temperatures, Ms. Brundtland called for transnational efforts to curb emissions.

"We would reach effective results more quickly and at less costs than through national measures alone. The most cost-effective projects are likely to be found in eastern Europe and in developing countries," Ms. Brundtland said.

Russian Central Bank chief sees Soviet model of Federal Reserve

MOSCOW (R) — Russian Central Bank head Georgy Matyukhin said the Soviet republics were trying to set up a banking system similar to the U.S. Federal Reserve, allowing each member significant decision-making power.

"We are trying to create something like that, but the situation is not easy because of this euphoria for independence (by republics)," he said in an interview.

Leading Soviet economist Grigory Yavlinsky would like to see an economic union, which would include a coordinated banking system but some republics want to distance themselves as much as possible from centralised institutions.

"Necessity will compel us to work together," Mr. Matyukhin said, adding that Russia, the biggest republic by far, would not seek to dominate the new banking union.

"We agreed to have less than 50 per cent of the voting power, but we want to have some veto rights," he said.

The Russian bank chief said the new system was being worked out at a series of meetings of republican central bank governors.

The U.S. Federal Reserve system controls monetary policy through a policy-making board of governors based in Washington and a network of district reserve banks and branch offices.

The board supervises the budget and operations of the decentralised reserve banks, which perform day-to-day functions such as issuing and have a say in

setting interest rates.

Mr. Matyukhin said the Soviet equivalent should come into existence soon because in January the Soviet state bank Gosbank would cease to exist. The Russian Central Bank is due to take over the functions of Gosbank in Russia.

Asked about the future of the Soviet bank for foreign economic affairs (Vneshekonombank), Mr. Matyukhin said it would continue to carry out its foreign debt servicing operations for the republics.

"We hope all those banks which are abroad will also belong to the republics," he said in reference to Vneshekonombank's foreign subsidiaries.

Vneshekonombank was due to be registered by the Russian Central Bank as a commercial bank by Dec. 15, according to a Russian parliament resolution.

But Mr. Matyukhin said this deadline was likely to be pushed back, possibly until January, while republics examine the bank's operations.

The bank chief also said that Ukraine's economy would be crippled if it replaced the battered Soviet rouble with its own currency.

"If they do this they will immediately paralyse their economy. We will immediately stop all payments to them," he told Reuters in an interview.

Ukraine, which voted overwhelmingly for independence from Moscow last week, plans to start replacing roubles next year, first with special coupons, then with a separate currency.

Mr. Matyukhin warned that

Russia would be forced to respond to the planned Ukrainian move and protect its economy from a possible flood of worthless roubles ditched by former Soviet republics.

He said he opposed introducing a new Russian currency, but said the bank was considering alternatives, including a scheme to add distinctive markings to Russian roubles and a system of cheques to reduce the amount of banknotes in circulation.

The Russian central bank could stop supplying roubles to Ukraine and bring to a halt trade between the two heavily inter-dependent republics.

"I am not sure if our enterprises will agree to take grivnas," Mr. Matyukhin said in reference to the currency used in Ukraine 1,000 years ago and now poised for a comeback.

"We shall take counter-measures if they introduce their own currency without consulting us," he said. "The only way is to stop our payments transactions. Who will suffer more? Ukraine or Russia? I suppose Ukraine."

Asked about future exchange rates for the Soviet rouble, the Russian bank chief said he believed there should be three rates which should eventually converge.

Russian Deputy Prime Minister Yegor Gaidar said last week that Russia would abandon the current system of two fixed rates set by the state bank and a flexible rate for tourists and Soviet citizens travelling abroad.

Mr. Matyukhin said there

should be a commercial rate for foreign trade reflecting the purchasing-power of the rouble, or the extent to which it can buy goods and services.

At a time of soaring inflation in the Soviet Union, the rouble would be sure to drop sharply from its current commercial rate of about 1.7 to the dollar, economists say.

The second rate should be a financial rate based on the relative value of assets such as property and shares designated for Western investors.

"We have made assessments of property to be privatised," Mr. Matyukhin said.

As this rate fluctuates, international investors might alter their portfolios as they do in the West where flows of capital are often determined by interest rate differentials.

Mr. Matyukhin said there might also be another free rate determined by the shadow economy. "We shall try to get all the rates to converge," he said.

The central bank chief also warned of the consequences of sweeping price liberalisation, proposed by Russian President Boris Yeltsin. He said there was not enough cash to meet demand at a time of rising prices, salaries and welfare payments.

Mr. Gaidar said Thursday that he was against any delay in implementing the price reform. He denied that salaries or bank accounts would be frozen, but said there could be some restrictions on cash availability.

Economists stress need for large grain crops to build up world reserves

WASHINGTON (R) — Bountiful crops will be needed next year to build up world grain reserves and meet the needs of leading consuming nations such as the Soviet Union, U.S. Agriculture Department (USDA) economists have said.

"Over the last few years the world has been dipping into grain stocks to meet its needs," Frank Gomme, a marketing specialist, told the annual USDA Agricultural Outlook Conference.

Lower grain harvests in the United States and the Soviet republics in 1991 have cut into grain reserves this year.

The Agriculture Department's latest estimate says the world will have 319 million tonnes of grains in reserve by the end of the year, down from 337.34 million tonnes last year.

The stockpile of grains has fallen to the lowest levels since the mid 1980s at a time when demand is rising, especially in

eastern Europe and the Soviet Union.

Soviet grain production this year is expected to drop by almost 30 per cent from last year's near record crop of 235 million tonnes, and U.S. production is estimated to be down 10 per cent to 277.64 million tonnes.

Craig Jagger, an economist with the USDA's Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service, said American wheat producers in 1991 harvested the second smallest crop since 1978.

"We are headed for very tight supplies," he said, pegging year-end U.S. wheat stocks at 514 million bushels, the second lowest since 1971.

Year-end stocks are critical since they act as a bridge to fill domestic and export needs until newly harvested grains become available. Also, the reserves help to make up for seasons of low production.

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Open Panel For The Public

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Slavic leaders: USSR has ceased to exist Yeltsin, Gorbachev hold crucial meeting on political future

MOSCOW (AP) — Russian President Boris Yeltsin met Monday in the Kremlin with Mikhail Gorbachev to brief him on the new Slavic Commonwealth and said there might be a role in it for the Soviet president.

Republic leaders rushed to Moscow Monday to assess the country's balance of power the morning after announcement of the new "commonwealth of independent states" that appeared to take most of them by surprise.

The agreement said Minsk, in Byelorussia, would become the new capital of the commonwealth, replacing Moscow.

Kazakhstan President Nursultan Nazarbayev, who attended the meeting, said he believed Mr. Gorbachev "still has not exhausted his opportunities" as a leader.

He said Mr. Yeltsin agreed to let republics' legislatures consider the commonwealth plan "in parallel" with Mr. Gorbachev's union treaty, apparently as a compromise to Mr. Nazarbayev and Mr. Gorbachev.

The flurry of activity in the Kremlin followed Sunday's declaration by Yeltsin, Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk and Byelorussian leader Stanislaw

Shushkevich that the Soviet Union has "ceased to exist" politically and that they were creating a new "commonwealth" open to all former republics.

Mr. Nazarbayev, whose resource-rich republic is a powerful pillar of the current union, was briefed along with Mr. Gorbachev by Mr. Yeltsin for 80 minutes about the commonwealth.

The commonwealth pact makes no mention of any role for the beleaguered Gorbachev, possibly putting the final nail in the coffin of his once-omnipotent Kremlin government and his proposed union treaty to rebuild the country as a loose confederation of sovereign states.

Mr. Nazarbayev emphasized that whatever structure emerged, the leaders must be careful not to ignite civil unrest and added that they agreed on the need for radical reforms to forestall economic collapse.

"We shouldn't use pressure tactics or blackmail. We should stop frightening people that civil war and bloodshed will begin," Mr. Nazarbayev said.

Mr. Nazarbayev also urged creation of an accord between

Russia, Byelorussia, Ukraine and Kazakhstan to keep centralized control over the nuclear weapons on their territory and ensure their safe dismantling. The four are home to most of the Soviet nuclear arsenal.

Russia, Byelorussia and Ukraine comprise nearly three-fourths of the Soviet Union's nearly 290 million people and possess most of its economic strength. They make up the country's traditional Slavic heartland.

The Kazakh leader ruled out for now any union by the five predominantly Muslim Soviet republics to counterbalance the powerful Slavic Commonwealth, saying he believed a "union of sovereign states" as proposed by Mr. Gorbachev might still be possible.

But Mr. Nazarbayev emphasized: "I am a pragmatist and a realist, and I will look at the situation." It was a clear indication that he too may withdraw his support for the union treaty and deprive Mr. Gorbachev of his last powerful ally.

Both Mr. Nazarbayev and Mr. Gorbachev spokesmen Andrei Grachev said Gorbachev might continue to have a role to play in

any future alliance. Mr. Grachev told Soviet journalists that Mr. Yeltsin raised the possibility of "having the post of president" among the commonwealth's leaders.

Mr. Nazarbayev said that, "at this difficult moment, Gorbachev still has not exhausted his opportunities. That's my personal opinion."

Mr. Nazarbayev said he found out about the agreement by telephone from Mr. Yeltsin only upon arriving at Moscow's VIP airport late Sunday. Mr. Gorbachev had no advance knowledge, either, and was not even informed until after Yeltsin telephoned President George Bush Sunday.

The White House had no immediate comment about the matter.

The presidents of Azerbaijan and Tadjikistan briefly attended the meeting with Mr. Gorbachev, according to the Soviet News Agency, (TASS). But a full meeting of the State Council, the body temporarily running the Soviet government, was canceled without explanation.

Vance leaves Yugoslavia saying no peace force until ceasefire

BELGRADE (R) — United Nations envoy Cyrus Vance left Yugoslavia, Monday after a week-long visit in which he decided no peacekeeping force could be sent to the country for the time being because of continued fighting in Croatia.

Airport sources said Mr. Vance flew out before dawn. He was heading for New York to present his findings to U.N. Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar.

The U.N. chief in turn must make his recommendations on a peace force to the Security Council.

But even before leaving Belgrade, Mr. Vance said a peace force could not be contemplated while the warring sides continued to break the latest ceasefire.

"The terms of the Geneva agreement have not been fully implemented so far, so deployment of a peacekeeping operation cannot be envisaged," he told reporters Sunday.

The Geneva pact brokered by Mr. Vance two weeks ago between breakaway Croatia, Serbia and the Yugoslav Federal Army called for a solid ceasefire and the lifting of the Croatian blockade of federal army barracks in the republic.

But the fighting in Croatia, pitting the republic's forces against the army and Serbian rebels, continued throughout Mr. Vance's visit. Each side accused the other of violating the ceasefire.

Heavy fighting was reported Sunday around the towns of Lipik, Novska and Nova Gradiska east of the Croatian capital Zagreb, and the frontline east Croatian town of Osijek came under renewed bombardment.

There were no immediate reports of fresh fighting Monday. Mr. Vance, a former U.S. Secretary of State, said he would make a fresh appeal for complete observance of the ceasefire. "The shooting and the shelling and the killing must stop," he said.

He came to Yugoslavia to assess prospects of sending in a U.N. force following the Geneva accord, the 14th truce since the fighting erupted in June after Croatia declared independence and its Serbian population rebelled.

During his stay, Mr. Vance conferred with Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic, Croatian President Franjo Tudjman and Federal Defence Minister Veljko Kadijevic. He also visited Osijek and the central republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Despite saying that no U.N. force should be deployed in Yugoslavia for now, Mr. Vance hailed as "major step forward" an accord between Croatia and federal forces at the weekend on terms for evacuating blockaded servicemen from the Zagreb area.

Mr. Vance has cited the failure of Croatian forces to stop blockading army barracks despite agreement to do so in a string of ceasefire accords as one reason for the continued fighting.

He said he had basically agreed with all the warring sides on a plan for deploying peacekeeping troops if a ceasefire could be made to stick.

But, reflecting obstacles this plan could face, the assembly of the self-styled Serbian autonomous province of Krajina in western Croatia ruled Sunday that peacekeepers could not be

stationed on its territory. Serbs in Croatia insist the U.N. peacekeeping force should separate the warring sides along the present front lines. But Croatia wants the force to be stationed along the republic's pre-conflict boundaries.

The Serbs and the army hold most of Croatia's Serb-populated territory.

A European Community peace conference, grouping leaders of the six Yugoslav republics under the chairmanship of Britain's Lord Carrington, resumes in the Hague Monday but officials said Mr. Vance would not attend.

A diplomat said little of substance was expected to come out of the talks, officially described as an informal stock-taking exercise.

Serbia, the only republic formally to have rejected the EC's plan to transform Yugoslavia into a loose free trade association, once again appeared to hold the key to progress at the negotiations, diplomats said.

A ruling Saturday by the conference's Arbitration Commission that the federal state of Yugoslavia was legally "in the process of dissolution" puts fresh pressure on Serbia, which is fighting to preserve the federation.

EC foreign ministers meet on Dec. 16 to consider whether to recognize Croatia and Slovenia, which also declared independence in June.

Germany has promised to recognize the two before Christmas and is urging its EC partners to follow suit.

Diplomats said continued Serbian resistance to the EC blueprint for a new Yugoslavia would encourage more EC states to line up behind Bonn.

Ukraine seeks nuclear arms abolition

LONDON (R) — Ukraine wants to form a collective security group with other nuclear republics from the disintegrating Soviet Union and eliminate all nuclear weapons, a Ukrainian official said Sunday.

Vladimir Grinyov, deputy chairman of the Ukrainian parliament, said in an interview that Ukraine might propose that "what's called the Soviet Union now" should get rid of all nuclear weapons in five or six years.

About 20 per cent of the Soviet Union's nuclear weapons are located in Ukraine, he said.

Leaders of Russia, Ukraine and Byelorussia said Sunday they were creating a commonwealth of independent states and Mr. Grinyov noted that Kazakhstan also had nuclear weapons.

"Ukraine is going to propose to the three members that a decision should be made on how long the presently-called Soviet Union should be a nuclear power," Mr. Grinyov said through an interpreter.

"We will also appeal to the rest of the world to set up a special foundation to abolish and liquidate nuclear weapons in the world."

Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk has said Ukraine, with a population of more than 50 million, has no nuclear power ambitions and has assured NATO Secretary-General Manfred Woerner of this.

Mr. Grinyov was visiting Britain at the head of a high-powered delegation, the first from Ukraine since the republic voted a week ago for independence from Moscow.

The delegation of government officials, bankers and businessmen aims to establish trading, commercial and banking links.

Moldova elects president amid ethnic strife

MOSCOW (R) — Mircea Snegur has been elected president of the Republic of Moldova by more than 98 per cent of voters after an election marred by ethnic strife.

In the run-up to polling Mr. Snegur, who ran unopposed for the presidency, had accused Soviet military units of occupying several areas of the republic and of distributing weapons to Russian extremists. The Soviet Armed Forces denied the charge.

Figures from the republic's election commission, quoted by the independent news agency Interfax Monday, gave Mr. Snegur 98.2 per cent of the vote in Sunday's poll. Turnout, despite boycotts by ethnic Russians and Turkic Gagauz, was put at 82 per cent.

Mr. Snegur's government, which proclaimed the southwestern republic's independence last August, has promised to move decisively to overhaul the economy, strengthen worker discipline and tackle vexing ethnic conflicts.

But scattered violence at the weekend, including armed blockades by minority Russians of some polling stations, underscored the difficulties ahead for the tiny republic, where many tie their future to that of neighbouring Romania.

Moldova, which has a population of 4.3 million, is mostly made up of Romanian lands incorporated into the Soviet Union in 1940.

17 killed in Soweto after Zulu rally

JOHANNESBURG (R) — Seventeen people have been killed in South Africa's Soweto black township in political faction fighting which erupted after a political rally of the Zulu-based Inkatha Freedom Party, police said Monday.

A spokesman said nine blacks were found slaughtered in a house opposite a migrant workers' hostel in the Dobsonville district of the vast township. All had been shot.

Eight more people were killed in gun battles and hand-to-hand clashes after the Inkatha rally Sunday at which Zulu chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi threatened to boycott all-party talks later this month on forging a post-apartheid constitution.

"Straight after the rally, there were three separate incidents in which three people were killed and two injured," police spokesman Timie Hargryn said. The

other victims were killed later in the evening, he added.

Inkatha supporters and those of Nelson Mandela's African National Congress (ANC) are involved in a bloody war for political supremacy in Transvaal and Natal province townships which has claimed nearly 4,000 lives since August last year.

A Sept. 14 peace accord signed by the warring parties and other political movements, including the white government, has failed to halt the carnage at grass-roots level, despite tentative leadership moves towards reconciliation.

Each side blames the other for the bloodshed which remains the greatest obstacle to a post-apartheid political settlement.

Soweto residents feared a bloody weekend because Inkatha supporters were given permission to carry "cultural weapons" — spears, clubs and stabbing sticks — to the political rally at the township's Jabulani Stadium.

The Dobsonville Hostel is an Inkatha stronghold and has been the scene of many bitter clashes between inmates, many of them Zulu migrants, and township residents.

Dr. Buthelezi told the rally he would stay away from all-party talks on Dec. 20 and 21 unless organisers agreed to his demand for three separate Zulu delegations.

Inkatha will represent Dr. Buthelezi's power base at the talks, where the white government and anti-apartheid movements will for the first time get down to discussing practical details of a new constitution.

But Dr. Buthelezi would like to expand his influence over the landmark conference with delegations being accepted from the KwaZulu homeland, of which he is political leader, and from the Zulu royal house, of which he is a prince.

Hong Kong's Liberals win by-election

HONG KONG (R) — Hong Kong's pro-democracy Liberals won a Legislative Council by-election Sunday to take another seat in the British colony's increasingly rebellious parliament.

Sunday's victory in the rural New Territories West constituency brings to 17 the number of seats held by Liberals and their allies in the 60-member council. They swept 16 of the 18 directly

contested seats in the colony's first direct elections in September.

The New Territories West seat became vacant after the incumbent, an able barrister, resigned over allegations he had forged his law degree.

Zachary Wong, a candidate backed by the Liberal United Democrats of Hong Kong, won

37 per cent of the votes in a low 27.4 per cent turnout.

In addition to 18 councillors chosen by direct election, 21 are elected by professional groups, such as lawyers and bankers.

Of the remaining 21 seats, four go to Hong Kong government officials and the rest are hand-picked by London-appointed governor Sir David Wilson.

Marcos pleads not guilty to tax evasion charges

MANILA (R) — Former Philippine first lady Imelda Marcos, brimming with confidence, pleaded not guilty Monday to tax evasion, saying government prosecutors were "wasting their time."

With a shake of her head each time, she pleaded "not guilty" to each of seven tax evasion charges read out by a clerk in the courtroom packed with reporters and loyalists.

Asked after the 30-minute arraignment if she was afraid of going to jail, Mrs. Marcos told reporters: "There is no place in the Philippines that will be jail for me."

"I am not afraid. I believe in divine justice," the once powerful widow of the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos said.

Mrs. Marcos is being tried before Judge Tomas Tadeo along with her only son, Ferdinand Jr., who is charged with two counts of tax evasion. He pleaded not guilty.

She is charged with failing to pay income and estate taxes of 5.7 billion pesos (\$205 million) and her son with evading taxes of 17,004 pesos (\$630).

Chief Prosecutor Aurelio Trampe said he would ask for the maximum five years jail for each of the seven charges against Mrs. Marcos.

Judge Tadeo set the next hearing for Dec. 16, but her lawyer said Mrs. Marcos would waive her right to attend.

She faces, theoretically, more than 400 years in jail if convicted on all 80 criminal and civil counts filed against her by President Corazon Aquino's government.

Dressed in white with a red and blue scarf and clutching a rosary, she was mobbed by dozens of supporters outside the courthouse in the Manila suburb of Quezon City.

"Imelda, Imelda," they chanted, and occasionally "Imelda for president," as placards proclaimed "Imelda, woman of dignity, not guilty."

The 62-year-old widow returned to the Philippines on Nov. 4 after nearly six years exile in the United States.

She and her husband were ousted in a popular revolt in 1986, accused of stealing of billions of dollars from the heavily-indebted country they ruled for 20 years.

China, India set to thaw relations after 30 years

PEKING (R) — Relations between China and India, icy since a border war nearly 30 years ago, look set to thaw with a fence-mending visit by Chinese Premier Li Peng to New Delhi this week.

Mr. Li will be the first Chinese prime minister to visit India since Chou Enlai in 1960.

Mr. Li's five-day visit starts Wednesday and could lead to the reopening of major consulates and resumption of border trade.

Border trade between the world's two most populous countries was suspended and consulates in Bombay and Shanghai closed when the border war erupted in 1962.

Peking's ambassador to India, Cheng Ruisheng, expressed delight Saturday that the giant neighbours shared the common view that economic development was the top priority for developing nations, and human rights followed.

China has been sharply criticised for human rights abuses after its 1989 military crackdown on pro-democracy protesters.

India is under scrutiny for alleged human rights violations in its northern Muslim-majority Kashmir and Jammu state, riven by a separatist movement, and in Punjab where it is fighting Sikh separatists.

Relations began to improve with the visit of the late Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi to China in December 1988 when a working group was set up to discuss the border issue.

Diplomats said the complexity of the border issue, the most divisive, meant it would take time to resolve.

India says China occupies 38,000 square kilometres of its territory in Aksai Chin, on its northwestern border. China says India's northeastern state Arunachal Pradesh covers 90,000 square kilometres of Chinese land.

Last May the two sides held working-level talks at which they made headway in discussing the border dispute.

India is concerned about the flow of Chinese arms into neighbouring Burma, whose military government New Delhi opposes. It is also worried about alleged Chinese sales of short-range missiles to India's old adversary Pakistan.

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Amnesty lists 200 arbitrary arrests in Burma

BANGKOK (R) — Amnesty International says it has the names of 200 people arbitrarily arrested by Burma's junta in the first seven months of this year as part of a concerted campaign to destroy opposition.

The London-based human rights group said it had a list of 1,500 people arrested for political reasons since the junta seized power in 1988.

"The organisation believes this may be only a proportion of the total number of political prisoners detained," Amnesty said in a report released Tuesday.

The Nobel Peace Prize will be awarded in Oslo Tuesday to Burma's most prominent political detainee, Aung San Suu Kyi. The husband and sons of the detained opposition leader will accept it on her behalf.

Aung San Suu Kyi has been under house arrest since July 1989 for outspoken attacks on military rule.

Her National League for Democracy (NLD) went on to win the May 1990 general election by a landslide but the generals have refused to hand over power and arrested most of the rest of its leaders.

"The ruling military council continues to step up its efforts to crush the non-violent opposition, passing new laws aimed at eliminating from political life people who won seats in last year's democratic elections," the Amnesty report said.

The report said almost 40 of those detained this year were sentenced to 25 years in prison, often on charges of high treason, after trials that Amnesty International suspects were blatantly unfair.

"The vague and sweeping provisions of the military's decrees have led to people being accused of treason simply for advocating a peaceful transfer of power, or accused of assisting armed opposition groups when in fact they weren't advocating violence."

Many of those arrested this year included elected members of parliaments, members of supporters of other political parties, student activists and Buddhist monks, the report said.

They were often arrested simply for criticising the junta, distributing leaflets, putting up pictures of national heroes at festivals, or flying a political flag at the same height as the national banner, the report said.

The military seized power by crushing a nationwide movement for democracy in 1988, killing thousands of people.

In Oslo, 9 former Nobel Peace Prize winners called Monday for world economic sanctions against Burma's military rulers to force them to switch to democracy and release Ms. Aung San Suu Kyi.

"Burma today is a totalitarian state. The military rules by force and terror. Not even a semblance

of respect for political and civil rights exists," the nine said in a statement at the end of a three-day Nobel seminar in Oslo.

The appeal was issued on the eve of an award ceremony which Ms. Aung San Suu Kyi cannot attend because she is under house arrest in Rangoon.

"Sanctions on trade with, and investment in, Burma should be imposed," the prize winners said, accusing the Burmese government of massive human rights abuses including torture, involvement in the drug trade and letting juveniles be sold into prostitution.

Their appeal also called for a ban on arms sales to Burma and a halt to all economic assistance programmes. Sanctions should be imposed until power was transferred to democratically elected representatives.

The laureates were later due to hand a letter congratulating Ms. Aung San Suu Kyi, 46, to her British husband and their two sons when they arrived for Tuesday's award ceremony.

Ms. Aung San Suu Kyi, who has been held under house arrest in Rangoon since July 1989, won this year's prize for a peaceful struggle for democracy against what the awarding Nobel Committee called "a regime characterised by brutality."

Burma's military leaders say she can leave the country only if she renounces politics and never

returns, despite appeals from many foreign nations for an unconditional release.

The nine laureates, including former West German Chancellor Willy Brandt, South African Archbishop Desmond Tutu and Tibet's spiritual leader the Dalai Lama, also sent a letter to the Burmese junta, addressed to General Saw Maung.

"As the lack of human rights and democracy in your country has caused much suffering and distress, we urge you to enter into dialogue with those leaders you have detained and so take a step in bringing peace to your troubled land," the letter read.

"Eighty of the elected NLD candidates were imprisoned and three have died in detention. Many others are in hiding or exile," the statement from the nine Nobel laureates said.

The statement charged that the country's leadership was involved in the opium trade and that it "countenances the sale into forced prostitution in Thailand of tens of thousands of Burmese juveniles, many be 12 years of age and under."

The Nobel Prize winners also said Burma's military leaders were permitting the wholesale cutting of thousands of square miles of ancient forests of teak.

"At this rate, Burma's vast teak forests — containing 80 per cent of the world's teak — will be destroyed in a few years."

COLUMN

Take the sausage and run

MOSCOW (R) — Criminals in the Russian city of Samara are turning cash for more valuable booty — food. Soviet News Agency (TASS) said one gunman robbed one startled shopper of sausage after firing a warning shot at his feet. It said food crimes were on the rise in Samara with scarce stocks of potatoes and vegetables frequent targets.

"Now criminals have switched to breaking into cafes, nurseries, schools and public storage facilities, hunting for food," it said.

Prisoner freed because he couldn't stand the food

AUCKLAND (R) — A New Zealand prisoner has had his sentence quashed because he could not stand the food in jail, the Sunday Star weekly reported. The Auckland court of appeal quashed the 15-month term of Chinese restaurant owner Ken Chung after his wife said prison fare was affecting his health, the weekly said. His wife told appeal court judges in a written affidavit Mr. Chung's health had been affected "simply because he is not accustomed to the European food which is standard fare."

He had been in the jail hospital with diarrhoea, stomach cramp and wind because he reacted strongly against the food. He was eating only boiled rice, the court was told. Mr. Chung, 34, had been found guilty of two charges of receiving 14 stolen cartons of steak and frozen seafood.

Actress wins Tibet's first beauty pageant

LHASA, Tibet (R) — A 27-year-old Tibetan actress overcame freezing cold and the giddy heights of the Himalayas to be crowned Miss Tibet in the Chinese-ruled region's first beauty contest Saturday night. Bai Ji, a member of the Tibetan song and dance troupe, won the best overall score out of 21 contestants dressed in traditional, jewel-laden costumes, some of them antique reflecting Tibet's ancient Buddhist culture. Ten foreign judges sat on the 30-strong panel but Chinese authorities dropped plans to allow in a large group of foreign reporters to cover the pageant. Journalists have mostly been barred from Tibet since martial law was clamped on the regional capital, Lhasa, during pro-independence demonstrations crushed by police in March, 1989. Martial law was lifted a year later but visitors say security remains tight. Bai Ji's victory in Lhasa's Holiday Inn Hotel was witnessed however by a tour group of 120 foreigners who were accompanied around local sights by up to five escorts each, said one of the tourists. "She's a lovely Tibetan lass," commented a judge. Bai Ji, who wins a trip to Hong Kong, was best overall in the five categories — general impression, artistic qualities, poise, appearance and grooming, and interviewing skills. Bikinis were out, said Holiday Inn's Italian General Manager Ernesto Barba, a Buddhist with a doctrine in religion, because of the Himalayan cold and China's conservative religious precepts.

New technique may discover hidden breast cancer

CHICAGO (R) — A new magnetic resonance imaging technique that scans